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ABSTRACT

This parent education curriculum contains a variety of materials designed to help local Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) hold meetings for parents on child rearing. The materials help organizers plan meetings on topics such as dating, drugs, and careers. The unit contains a leader's guide, which contains a description of how to plan meetings, how to get an audience, and how to be a good meeting leader. Also included are 18 meeting cards which focus on topics of interest to parents and give facts about that topic, ideas for carrying out a meeting on the topic, tips for how parents can help their preteens or teens, and resources and meeting strategies. Topics include the following: (1) nutrition and fitness; (2) physical and emotional development; (3) decision making; (4) drugs, alcohol and smoking; and (5) choosing positive career and life goals. The Kit also contains quizzes, meeting handouts for reproduction, a calendar planner and meeting checklist, and a list of seven publications and an order form. (JB)

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PARENTING

The Underdeveloped Skill

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PARENTING

The Underdeveloped Skill

WHAT YOUR PTA CAN DO

Parenting preteens and teens

The preteen and teen years are a time of challenge to both parent and child, but they can also be a time of great rewards as parents see their children become young men and women.

Your PTA can help parents prepare to face the challenge of the preteen and teen years. There's never a guarantee, but prepared parents can better help make their children's transition to adulthood a happier and more successful one while assisting them to avoid problems such as substance abuse and teenage pregnancy.

The facts

Adolescents make some of the most important decisions of their lives: whether to smoke cigarettes, drink alcoholic beverages or use drugs, become sexually active, drop out of school or go to college, with limited knowledge on which to base their decisions.

- One out of every 40 high school seniors uses marijuana on a daily or near daily basis; more than 33 percent of all seniors report using an illicit drug other than marijuana. (1)

- Forty-five percent of all 16-year-olds have had sexual intercourse and 33 percent of all 15-year-olds (2); within six months of becoming sexually active, half of all teenage girls become pregnant, and eight out of 10 pregnant teens drop out of school. (3)

- Studies have shown adolescents to be the most poorly nourished Americans. They tend to skip breakfast, eat snacks high in fat and sugar and have the lowest participation rates in school meal programs. (4)

- Parents are the first teachers of their children and important influences in their lives. This continues to be true during the teen years. For instance, 63 percent of young people say they would turn to parents for help in "deciding what to do with my life." Yet, many parents feel that they don't have the information they need in order to offer good advice.

What your PTA can do

The *Parenting: The Underdeveloped Skill* box, prepared jointly by National PTA and the March of Dimes, contains a variety of materials designed to help you and your PTA hold a meeting or series of meetings for parents. These materials will help you plan meetings on topics such as dating, drugs and careers. Many of these topics are of particular concern to parents of preteens and teens. However, it's important for parents to remember that their greatest chance of teaching, guiding and influencing their children is before their children become teens. Therefore, many of the topics covered in this box are appropriate for parents of very young children too! Furthermore, the **goal** of *Parenting: The Underdeveloped Skill* is to help parents better fulfill their role in helping children grow in a positive way toward adulthood. Help parents start developing their skills as early as possible; use this *Parenting: The Underdeveloped Skill* box.

How to use this box

First, get to know the materials provided in this box for your use:

- **Parenting: The Underdeveloped Skill—What Your PTA Can Do** is the leader's guide you are now reading. This guide contains a description of how to plan meetings, how to get an audience and how to be a good meeting leader.

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- **Eighteen meeting cards**—Each card focuses on a topic of interest to parents and gives facts about that topic, ideas for carrying out a meeting on the topic, tips for how parents can help their preteens or teens, resources and meeting "energizers" to get the meeting going. What topics do the cards cover? To find out see the index of cards on page 8.

- **Seven reproducibles**—Copy these and hand out to parents in your meetings or use in planning your meetings. The reproducible sheets in this box are as follows:

Meeting handouts

- *Helping children accept people's differences*
- *Sex and sexuality—a quiz*
- *Talking skills/Listening skills*—tips for parents to improve their communication skills
- *Helping children like themselves*—tips for improving self-esteem
- *Smoking, alcohol and drugs quiz*
- *AIDS: What parents should know*
- *Teens and AIDS: Play it safe or don't play at all!*

Tools to help you plan

- *Calendar planner and meeting checklist*—a list of steps to help you plan your calendar of meetings.

- *Eight publications and one film.* Use them for background information. Order the publications in quantity to distribute to parents at your meetings. (See the publications list included in this box for ordering these and other materials.)

How to Talk to Your Child About Sex
How to Talk to Your Preteen and Teen About Sex
Teens, Alcohol and Drugs: What Parents Can Do
Young Children and Drugs: What Parents Can Do
Discipline: A Parent's Guide
How to Talk to Your Teens and Children About AIDS
What to Tell Your Child About Prejudice and Discrimination
Mirrors: Leading Children to Self-Esteem
Mirrors: A Film About Self-Esteem

Make this parenting box a living resource. To get the most from using *Parenting: The Underdeveloped Skill* and to prolong its usefulness to your PTA, use the box as a file for information and material that you collect while using it. For instance, clip articles on the topics covered by the box to the appropriate meeting card. For example, if you find information on adolescent pregnancy in your state for a meeting, add those statistics to the *Talking to preteens and teens about sex* card. Add copies of helpful publications from National PTA, March of Dimes or other organizations and ordering information to the "Resources and publications" section. File agendas and fliers in your box. Add a file for ideas and one for speakers. But be selective about the materials you add to the box to avoid clutter and outdated or useless materials.

Local units: If you have the box on loan from your PTA council or state office, consider making a copy of the materials in it and beginning your own box.

To plan a meeting using the cards, review the information and ideas presented in the card, related publications, reproducibles and related cards. Choose meeting activities from the card for your meeting or come up with your own ideas. Identify the reproducibles or publications in the box that will be helpful in carrying out your meeting activities and goals. Order copies of publications, or copy the reproducibles. You may want to prepare your own reproducibles using "The facts" or "Tips for parents" sections on each card. For more detailed tips on how to plan meetings, see the next section, "How to produce successful meetings!"

The various components in this box contain a tremendous amount of information, ideas and tools for your use. You can mix and match ideas and information from related cards to plan meetings and other activities as well. For instance, cards from the section on fitness, nutrition and hygiene could serve as a starting point for developing a health fair. Let teachers in your school know about the films listed on the meeting cards, since many are appropriate for classroom use. Suggest that your local or school library purchase some of the books cited in the card resource sections for use by teens, parents, teachers and PTA leaders. Reprint the "Tips for parents" section in your PTA newsletter. For more ideas on how to use this box, see the "Where to go from here" section in this guide.

How to produce successful meetings!

Read the following sections, "Divide and coordinate!," "How to choose your meeting(s)," "Plan your parenting meetings carefully," "Choose meeting activities," "How to get an audience," "How to be a good meeting leader" and "Working with other organizations," and you'll be well on your way to producing great parenting meetings!

Divide and coordinate!

Once your PTA decides that it wants to use *Parenting: The Underdeveloped Skill,* set up a working committee to carry out your plans. Don't ask just one person to do all the work. **Divide** the work. Working with others helps to share the load and brings a variety of skills, knowledge and points of view to your effort. It also helps to develop future PTA leaders!

You will need someone who coordinates and monitors the work of all the other committee members as well as people to plan and run your parenting meetings; plans and carries out the publicity efforts; makes arrangements for meeting space, equipment, room setup and handouts; greets meeting participants; and handles refreshments. Refer to the "Calendar planner" section of the *Calendar planner and meeting checklist* reproducible for help.

How to choose your meeting(s)

First, consider the needs and interests of parents in your PTA. Have drugs and alcohol been of particular concern? Are the youngsters in your school just approaching puberty? Or is your PTA based in a senior high school where teens are thinking about careers and/or college?

We strongly recommend that you **take a survey.** It's the best way to find out parents' interests. Your survey could be an informal show of hands at a PTA meeting, a telephone survey or a survey distributed to all the members of your PTA as an attachment to your parent newsletter. Try to reach all the parents of children in your school. The more input you receive

from parents on the topics that interest them, the more successful you will be in selecting meeting topics that serve parents' needs and attract an audience.

Set goals. Set goals appropriate to your community and PTA. For instance, the following might be goals for your PTA:

- To run meetings on all 18 card topics over a period of two years; or
- To select three or four specific cards that meet your needs; or
- To urge the community to deal with a major problem such as substance abuse or adolescent pregnancy; or
- To provide a service to parents that may bring new members to your PTA.

Whether your PTA has ambitious or modest goals, remember that thoughtful planning will help you reach them. Choose the meetings and meeting activities that will achieve your goals.

Plan your parenting meetings carefully

Once your PTA defines the topics members are interested in and your goals, begin planning your calendar of parenting meetings and the meetings themselves. See the sections called "Choose meeting activities" and "How to be a good meeting leader" for more help. To begin planning:

Establish agendas, calendars and schedules to keep you and your committee on track. Each time you hold a committee meeting prepare an agenda **and** make sure that your meeting has a purpose! Schedule meetings well in advance. Prepare a calendar indicating when tasks such as promotion need to be accomplished. Schedule parenting meeting follow-up such as thank-you letters, reports and further parent education activities. Use the *Meeting checklist* reproducible to help develop your calendar.

Develop a clear agenda for meetings, including time for beginning and ending. Introductory remarks should always be brief and to the point. Inform your audience of the meeting topic, the presenters' names and credentials, how long the meeting will run and whether there will be any breaks. If you expect participation from the audience, you should state that.

Choose your meeting site carefully. Consider the number of people you expect to attend, the activities you've planned and whether you are serving refreshments. For instance, if you want an informal atmosphere that encourages audience participation, a classroom style setup with a head table or podium won't work. Instead, chairs arranged in a circle or semicircle will convey the feeling you want.

Include FUN in your agenda. How? Use energizers to start off a meeting—see a more complete description in "Choose meeting activities" on the next page. Vary activities and the pace of your meeting by, for example, following a film with a discussion. Give the audience a challenge and the chance for accompolishment through such activities as using role playing to practice communication skills. Be enthusiastic and use your sense of humor!

Know your topic. Once you decide to hold a meeting on a specific card topic, familiarize yourself with the information and ideas on the card. Read any related publication or reproducible included in this box. Explore the topic further by reading the resource materials listed on the card or by finding your own resources. Consult your local library and community organizations for help. While you may plan to invite a speaker or panel of experts, you still need to be familiar and comfortable with your topic.

But if you plan to serve as the speaker yourself, you must know your topic very well. Look for the latest information available. Read a variety of sources in order to learn different viewpoints and approaches. Visit your local library. Consult your librarian. Some libraries may be able to order the book or periodical you need. Contact government agencies, social service groups and associations that may have information on your topic. Your library may have directories to such groups. Try the *Yellow Pages* too. See the "Resources" section of this guide for possible sources of information. Since it takes intensive preparation to act as leader, inviting other speakers or using a panel is a good alternative.

An important role that you or another volunteer should serve is that of meeting facilitator. A meeting facilitator introduces the meeting topic and sets the tone for the meeting. The facilitator also introduces the meeting activities, speaker or panel members; helps to moderate discussion, questions or comments; and wraps up the meeting with a summary. Meeting facilitators are troubleshooters and assist the speaker by guiding a discussion that may be getting out of control. Meeting facilitators should always discuss their role with the speaker or panel members in order to clarify what roles each will play during the meeting.

Always have a plan for ending your meetings. Leave time to wrap up the meeting with more summarizing statements.

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Ask for comments. Review the most important points made during the meeting. Briefly remind participants of their accomplishments during the meeting, compliment the audience and the presenters, or restate any resolutions the audience made to improve their knowledge, skills or behavior.

Choose meeting activities

Choose meeting activities that will accomplish your meeting goals, involve the participants and provide variety and fun! The following are general types of meeting activities that can be adapted to a variety of topics.

Energizers

Energizers are activities that interest meeting participants in the topic in an exciting or thought-provoking way. They usually take only a short amount of time, 5 to 20 minutes at the most. Energizers may use the following approaches:

Introspection to get meeting participants thinking about their own feelings, experiences and expectations.

Brainstorming to generate many ideas and get participants actively involved. Remember, brainstorming requires that participants toss their ideas out quickly, without judgment or analysis.

Problem solving to get meeting participants thinking analytically about the topic.

Quiz or questionnaire to show meeting participants how much knowledge they have about a particular topic or how they feel about the topic.

Role playing. See the section below.

Core meeting activities

Audiovisuals—Audiovisuals can add excitement to your meeting. They can explain a problem, arouse emotion and provide the group with a common experience. Consider using the audiovisuals listed on the meeting cards as discussion starters or as the focus of your meeting. Review all audiovisual materials you plan to use before your meeting. If loan or rental arrangements do not allow you time to shop for the right audiovisual, try to get a description or review that gives you a clear idea of what the film is like. Be certain to view all films before your meeting. You may want to write down comments on the information or viewpoint presented in the film, and you will want to be sure that it is in good condition.

Use the following as a checklist to help you get ready:

- If you plan to use a film, videotape or audiotape, slide presentation or other audiovisual in your meeting, order the **correct** equipment since there are many different types of projectors and other equipment. **Rehearse using your equipment until you are absolutely certain that you know how to use it.**

- Are electrical outlets handy and adequate? Are heavy-duty extension cords necessary? If so, will you need to tape them to the floor to avoid accidents?

- Will the room setup and size allow everyone in the audience to see the film, slide presentation or video? Arrange the seating to avoid problems.

- Make sure that you have spare parts such as an extra projector bulb for your equipment.

- If you are using a videotape, play it on the largest television monitor available. Raise the monitor well above the heads of the audience to improve viewing.

- Learn how to use the room lighting system. Make sure that shades or draperies are available to cut off outside light.

- Check the sound system. Find the appropriate volume level.

- When working with speakers and panel members, ask them what kinds of audiovisuals they will need.

- Blackboards and flipcharts are also visual aids and can be used effectively to emphasize key points in a presentation or discussion. Remember, even basics such as these require your attention to details: don't forget to have chalk and erasers or markers.

Speakers—A speaker can make or break a meeting. Speakers need to understand their topic *and* be good communicators. As the main attraction at your parenting meeting, a good speaker should both inform and inspire an audience! So take care in recruiting your speaker.

How can you be sure that a speaker will do a good job? First, try to get personal recommendations. If no one in your PTA has heard a good speaker on the topic you want to cover, try consulting with other PTAs in your area and your council, district or state PTA. You may find potential speakers among, or good referrals from, guidance counselors, teachers, doctors, nurses, psychologists and other professionals. Look to local hospitals, colleges and universities, and local and state government agencies for possible speakers. You might also try other community service organizations, which may know of speakers on your topic.

After finding the right speaker, be certain that this person understands what you require. Let the speaker know the following: what the goal of the meeting is; what size and kind of audience you expect; how much time there will be to speak; what points about the topic your PTA wishes to have included; whether you want a focus on practical tips for parents or hard facts about the topic; background information, for instance, that your PTA has already held a variety of activities and meetings on the topic or will be holding a community event to which the meeting is tied; whether there will be other speakers; and whether you plan to distribute pamphlets or show an accompanying film and whether you plan a question and answer period to follow the presentation. Give your speaker a copy of the meeting card appropriate to the topic plus any related publications or reproducibles.

Panels—If you feel that your audience may want to hear a variety of points of view on a topic or information that cannot be supplied by one speaker, consider using a panel. For instance, a panel on *Drugs: Get the facts and start talking* made up of a psychologist working on drug rehabilitation, a physician, a parent and a community leader working on drug abuse prevention might suggest different views on how to prevent drug use.

When recruiting your panel inform all speakers that they will be sharing the podium with others who may have different points of view. Ask each person to address the questions that your committee feels the audience will be concerned about. Plan to have a question-and-answer period following the panel presentations and inform your panel members of this. Be ready to moderate a panel discussion. (See "How to be a good meeting leader" on page 6 for tips on this skill.)

Discussion—Discussion can be one of the most effective ways to get an audience involved and caring about your meeting topic, but starting a discussion can be difficult. One way to get a discussion started is to break into small groups of three to five people so that participants feel less intimidated by the large group and more responsible for talking with their fellow group members. Ask each group to discuss a problem, idea or question, and then bring the entire group back together for reports or a general discussion. Energizers and audiovisuals can give momentum to discussions.

Another way to develop meaningful discussion is to ask participants open-ended questions about feelings, opinions and ideas to make comparisons. Possible questions might be: "How does this relate to you?" "What feelings do you have about this?" "Do you agree? If so, why?" "What could you do to overcome this problem?" "How could someone react to such a situation?" "How does this relate to that?"

Role playing—Role playing can be exciting, involving and fun, but people often feel awkward and hesitant about getting started.

If you want to use role playing in a meeting, it's important to emphasize that acting skills are NOT necessary! It's also important to convince the audience that their on-the-spot performance in the role playing is what is wanted. After all, we don't usually rehearse our conversations with children. Another tip: don't let your role playing pass the allotted time even if "characters" are still talking. Three to five minutes is usually enough for most role-playing situations.

If audience members are reluctant to participate in role playing, try this: Place chairs at the center of the group. Each chair will represent a character in the role playing. Ask the audience to break up into equal-size groups, one for each character. Any member of that group can call out what the character says. If you can't get role playing to work for you, use the role-playing scenarios as discussion starters. See the meeting cards for some types of role-playing situations.

How to get an audience

It can take a lot of work to get people to attend your meeting, but good planning and making the most of your opportunities can make all the difference.

Toot your horn—whenever you can! Make the most of PTA opportunities. Place ads and articles about your meetings in PTA bulletins. Make announcements at PTA meetings and events. Distribute fliers to parents. (See the sample flier on this page.

Take advantage of local newspapers. Send notices about your meetings to the community events calendar of your newspapers. That includes neighborhood papers and advertising

Use the following sample flier to help you develop your own fliers.

ANNOUNCING
PARENTING: THE UNDERDEVELOPED SKILL

Do you want to be a better parent?

Do you wonder what makes your teen tick?

Do you want to prepare your preteen for important decisions about smoking, drugs and sexuality?

If so, you are NOT alone! The Hometown Middleschool PTA invites you to attend a series of parenting meetings.

October 10, 1990, 8:00 p.m.	**—Raising Physically Fit Children**
November 12, 1990, 7:30 p.m.	**—Building Children's Self-Esteem**
December 5, 1990, 7:30 p.m.	**—Alcohol: the #1 Drug of Abuse**
February 15, 1991, 7:30 p.m.	**—Helping Children Make Good Decisions**
March 12, 1991, 7:30 p.m.	**—Talking About the Future**
April 15, 1991, 7:30 p.m.	**—Talking to Preteens and Teens About Sex**
May 10, 1991, 7:30 p.m.	**—Helping Children Develop Personal Responsibility**

All meetings will be held at the Hometown YWCA, 1010 Main Street, room 10. For more information, contact Mary Smith, Parenting Chairman, Hometown Middleschool PTA, at 777-1234 after 8 p.m.

REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED!!!
BABYSITTING WILL BE PROVIDED!

circulars as well as daily papers. Simply write one or two paragraphs telling who, what, when, where, why and how.

When working with the press, keep their deadlines and requirements in mind. Call your local papers to find out their procedures and where notices and press releases should be sent.

Ask about posting notices on community bulletin boards in supermarkets, places of worship, libraries, community centers, YMCAs and other gathering places.

Ask concerned businesses and organizations to post your fliers or announce your meetings in their newsletters. Brainstorm other possible ways to promote the meetings with your committee. Are you taking advantage of every opportunity your community has to offer?

Be interesting! Make your writing lively, informative, direct and clear. Use short sentences with active verbs. Show your readers why the information is important to them. In your flier or article use two or three compelling facts about the topic that will grab the reader's attention. Use visuals on your fliers too.

Prove your credibility! Announce your speakers and their credentials on your flier or in your ad or article. Or indicate who created the film you plan to show. If you are acting as the meeting leader, include appropriate information about yourself or indicate the sources of the two or three facts you list on the meeting topic. If your PTA has achieved some noteworthy accomplishments, you may wish to name a few.

How to be a good meeting leader

Good leadership skills and good preparation will help you run a good meeting and also reduce those "before the meeting jitters."

Greet your meeting participants. Arrive at your meeting site early, make sure that everything is in order and then greet participants as they arrive. Introduce yourself and ask the participants' names. As starting time nears and participants are filing into the room rapidly, you'll probably need assistance from other PTA volunteers in greeting people and directing them to coffee, a place to sit or a handout table. Taking time to make people comfortable and welcome will pay off during your meeting and in meetings to come.

Be clear. Being prepared will help you to be clear. You may wish to practice your remarks in front of a mirror, with a friend or with your committee. List key points and the order in which they should be given. You may want to list your key points on an easel to keep you on track and guide the audience at the same time.

Be positive. A cheerful, friendly attitude can do wonders to relax audience members and help them react positively to the information presented in your meeting.

Don't make judgments. There are many differing viewpoints and beliefs among people, especially on sensitive topics such as sexuality and substance abuse. Even topics such as hygiene and friendship can arouse many reactions. As a meeting leader, your job is to help people get in touch with their own feelings about the subject at hand, learn about and be tolerant of the viewpoints of others and discuss these differing views. A meeting leader should not try to change the viewpoints of a roomful of meeting participants by imposing his or her own point of view of the meeting's discussion or activities. It's more likely that this type of behavior will alienate participants.

Be flexible. A meeting, no matter how well planned, may take unexpected directions. Participants may want to discuss ideas that the leader has not anticipated. Judge whether the unexpected direction is useful and interesting to the group. If it is, then go with the flow. If it seems to be a fruitless digression, try to gently bring the group back to a more valuable line of discussion.

Listen. Listen to your audience as well as to your speakers. You may want to check your understanding of a question or comment by a participant by reiterating the thought in your own words before dealing with it.

You also need to note the general audience mood from time to time. Are they engrossed? Bored? Confused? If things do not seem to be going well, try to deal with the problem. One way may be to acknowledge the problem directly. You could say, "I think we have gotten off the track—let's get back to the goals of this meeting."

Involve all group members. If necessary, elicit comments, questions and ideas from quiet members; avoid recognizing group members who dominate the conversation. Thank people for their remarks and suggest, "We need to hear other points of view now." If individuals regularly direct comments and questions to you, redirect them to the group. You might say something like: "That's an interesting question. What do you think?"

Deal with disruptive behavior. Occasionally, a meeting participant may criticize the leader, talk during the presentation, act hostile or bored or dispute facts.

To prevent or counteract disruptive behaviors, come to your meeting prepared, positive and friendly. Always remain calm, react to disruptive persons as positively as possible. It's helpful to couch your comments in a nonbelligerent, even tentative way, using words and phrases such as "perhaps," "maybe" and "why don't we."

Acknowledge the person's concerns. If someone has just made an angry speech, you could react by saying, "I see that you are very concerned about this issue," and then suggest a way to address the person's concern or ask the group to assist. You might indicate that "this meeting may not be the appropriate place to discuss this as fully as you would like." Or move on by redirecting the group's attention. "Thanks for your comments. Perhaps now we should go on to another issue." Seek support from the group to change the subject or counter the disruptive person's remarks.

Never take sides in a discussion, whether it's heated or not. Remember, there are many different viewpoints in any discussion and the role of meeting facilitator is to create the atmosphere for a productive exchange of information, ideas and opinions. If you are asked for your opinion, answer first by saying that it is not your opinion that counts but what comes out of the group discussions. If you are pressed for your opinion and decide to answer, remember to state, "This is just my personal viewpoint, and you may feel differently."

Knowing the facts and being able to support them is your best protection if your facts are disputed. (See "Know your topic," page 3.) If a question is asked and you do not know the answer, say you will check on the information. Do so and get back to the person or the group, if necessary. Do **not** get bogged down in arguments over statistics. Remember, even if a statistic or fact is quetioned, your meeting is not based on one item of information. The goal of your meeting is broader and should not be undermined by a questioned statistic.

Working with other organizations

Teamwork is often the key to getting things done in your PTA committee and beyond in your community! Contact your local March of Dimes chapter and see what support it can give to your PTA. March of Dimes **may** be able to provide your PTA with information, resources, films, audiovisual aids, suggestions for speakers and panels, publicity assistance and meeting space. It is also possible that your March of Dimes can help implement *Parenting: The Underdeveloped Skill*. Why not call early in your planning and find out whether you can work together?

Explore the possibility of cooperating with other groups or associations as well such as state and federal government agencies, community and youth-serving organizations such as YMCAs, Boys and Girls Clubs, scouts, chambers of commerce, fraternal organizations and many other such groups. Many special focus groups may also provide support and leads to speakers, panel participants and films. Ask the groups you contact whether they have newsletters, bulletin boards, mailings or other communication vehicles through which you can promote your meetings. Thank groups from whom you receive assistance and give credit wherever credit is due.

Where to go from here

The *Parenting: The Underdeveloped Skill* box has been developed specifically to help PTA leaders like you to plan and carry out meetings on parenting. However, you may also be able to use this box as a starting point in developing and carrying out other activities of help to parents, teachers and children. For instance:

- Copy and distribute the *Talking skills/Listening skills* reproducible and send it to parents with your PTA newsletter or other mailing.

- Use the meeting cards in the *Choose positive career and life goals* section to plan and develop a careers and futures day at your school. Invite people from various walks of life to talk about their careers, both traditional and nontraditional. Include parenting, homemaking, avocations, people with multiple careers and people with their own businesses. Provide questionnaires to teens on their personal goals and values.

- Hold a "health extravanganza" with activities and events on how to make good nutrition and exercise a part of everyday life. Use some of the ideas provided on the cards in the *Eat healthy and be physically fit* section. Have a nutritious recipe giveaway or swap session along with prepared recipes for tasting. Run exercise classes, games and races. Arrange for a booth where people can have their blood pressure taken. Have representatives from groups and organizations that promote good nutrition and exercise talk about both what people can do and what opportunities are available in your community. Have a health film festival as part of your activities.

- Reproduce questions from the *Smoking, alcohol and drugs quiz* for your PTA newsletter. Or reproduce the "Tips for parents" section from any of the meeting cards you think appropriate and print them in your PTA newsletter.

- Plan to participate in Drug and Alcohol Awareness Week during the first week in March. Use the meeting cards on drugs, alcohol and smoking to plan a series of activities on this important topic.

- Work with your school or local library to make books on parenting, drugs, sexuality, careers and health available to arents, teachers and teens. Use the cards to help you develop a list of books to consider adding to the library. Ask your library to highlight these books in special displays. And don't forget about films.

- Consider starting a PTSA (Parent, Teacher and Student Association) if your PTA doesn't have student members. Students can help a PTA by providing the student perspective and getting other students interested in PTA programs and activities. Ask students to help you develop meeting agendas and activities from the cards, which will help involve teens. Be sure to invite students as well as parents to your meetings.

- Work with other groups to develop or support a community service program in which preteens and teens can get involved. Volunteer work can enhance self-esteem, develop a sense of responsibility and help preteens and teens make friends. Possible volunteer programs might be working with senior citizens, establishing a program to combat illiteracy or conducting a community cleanup campaign.

- Hold a poster contest. Ask students to design posters encouraging people not to smoke. Give students information from the meeting card on smoking to help them get started. Provide awards for the best posters and hang them in places frequented by preteens and teens.

As you can see, there are a variety of ways in which you can use the information, resources and ideas provided on the meeting cards in ways other than meetings. You can also help accomplish the goals of *Parenting: The Underdeveloped Skill* by developing school and community events and services that provide parents, teachers and students information, ideas and activities that will enhance the quality of their lives.

References

1—U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Alcohol, Drug Abuse and Mental Health Administration, 1989.

2—*How to Help Your Teenager Postpone Sexual Involvement,* Marion Howard, Continuum Publishing Co., 1989.

3—*How to Say No and Keep Your Friends,* Sharon Scott, Human Resource Press, Inc., 1986.

4—National Education Association, "The Relationship Between Nutrition and Learning," NEA, Washington, DC, 1989.

Resources

For the leader:

- *PTA Pocket Pal #3: Leadership.* This handy publication reviews a variety of leadership skills, including talking before a group and listening, both important to meeting facilitators and leaders. Available from National PTA, 700 N. Rush St., Chicago, IL 60611-2571. Cost: $3.00.

- "How to Make Committee Meetings More Productive," *PTA Today,* May 1985. This article will help you run more productive planning meetings. Many tips are also applicable to moderating or leading parenting meetings. Write the National PTA Program Division for a copy. Free.

- *Nuts & Bolts #7: How to Develop Leaders for Your PTA.*

Leadership is a skill that *can* be learned. This *Nuts & Bolts* is an excellent place to start. Write National PTA/Program Division, 700 N. Rush St., Chicago, IL 60611-2571. Include a legal size, self-addressed envelope with 45 cents postage.

● Heritage Arts Publishing offers excellent resources for developing leadership skills. Two good books are *Developing Your Leadership Potential* by Rick Lynch, $5.00 plus $1.40 shipping and handling, and *101 Tips for Volunteer Recruitment* by Steve McCurley and Sue Vineyard, $8.00 plus $1.40 shipping and handling. Heritage Arts Publishing, 1807 Prairie Ave., Downers Grove, IL 60515; (708) 964-1194.

For the parent:

● *How to Talk So Kids Will Listen and Listen So Kids Will Talk* by Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish. This excellent book will help parents improve their communication skills with numerous examples, work sheets and cartoons. Avon Books, The Hearst Corporation, 1790 Broadway, New York, NY 10019. Cost: $7.95.

● *Getting Closer* by Ellen Rosenberg. This helpful book, written for parents, reviews the many concerns of parents, preteens and early teens. It suggests ways parents can react to the changes their preteens and early teens are going through. Although geared to parents of preteens and early teens, the book may be helpful reading for parents of younger and older children as well. The Berkley Publishing Group, 200 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016. Cost: $7.95.

● *ForParents: A Newsletter for Families That Communicate*, a publication designed to improve family communication. Contains articles and a good resource section. Published five times a year, in January, March, May, September and November. *ForParents*, 8481 N. Main St., Eden, NY 14057; (800) 992-9147. Cost: $14.95 per year; back issues available.

● *Parenting for the '90s* by Philip Osborne outlines different methods of parenting approaches. The book divides the parent-child relationship into four areas: no problem, the child's problem, the parent's problem and the mutual problem. *ForParents*, 3011 Schoolview Road, Eden, NY 10457; (800) 992-9147. Cost: $9.95 paperback plus shipping and handling.

● *Pick Up Your Socks . . . and Other Skills Growing Children Need!* is practical and easy to read. It's especially useful in evaluating existing interaction patterns and developing a plan to deal with persistent problems. *ForParents*, 3011 Schoolview Road, Eden, NY 10457; (800) 992-9147. Cost: $11.95 paperback plus shipping.

For the preteen or teen:

● *Choices* and *Challenges*, both by Mindy Bingham, Judy Edmondson and Sandy Stryker, are workbooks for girls and boys respectively that cover topics such as career planning, marriage and children. Advocacy Press, PO Box 236, Santa Barbara, CA 93102. Cost: $14.95.

● *Self-Discovery* by Gilda Gussin and Ann Buxbaum is a workbook for teens covering goals and decision making among other topics. Learning for Life, Management Sciences for Health, 165 Allandale Road, Boston, MA 02130. Cost: $12.95.

● *Growing Up Feeling Good* by Ellen Rosenberg contains chapters on friendship, popularity, dating and peer pressure. A good book for preteens and young teens. Penguin 2 USA, 120 Woodbine St., Bergenfield, NJ 07621; (800) 331-4624. Cost: $9.95.

Meeting cards index

Section A—Red tab

Eat healthy and be physically fit

- *Nutrition: What you should know*
- *Raising physically fit children*
- *As the body changes: Hygiene*

Section B—Pink tab

Develop physically and emotionally

- *Talking to preteens and teens about sex*
- *Building children's self-esteem*
- *Teen stress: What you can do*
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Section C—Purple tab

Learn to make good decisions

- *Helping children make good decisions*
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Section D—Blue tab

Say NO to drugs, alcohol and smoking

- *Drugs: Get the facts and start talking*
- *Alcohol: The #1 drug of abuse*
- *Say NO to smoking*

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Choose positive career and life goals

- *Talking about the future*
- *Helping children choose a career*
- *Should all children go to college?*

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PARENTING

The Underdeveloped Skill

RAISING PHYSICALLY FIT CHILDREN

Objectives

- To give parents information on physical fitness and its importance
- To show parents how to help their preteens and teens develop good fitness

The facts

- Only 40 percent of students age 10-18 engage in appropriate and regular physical activity. (1)
- A new study shows a decline in students' cardiovascular endurance and an increase in their weight. Students older than 10 take about a minute longer to run a mile than the same age students studied 10 years ago and likewise have gained 3.6 to 8.3 pounds during the decade. (2)
- Children and youth who get regular exercise have better math, reading and writing scores than those who don't exercise regularly. (1)

We all know that exercise and physical activity are good for us. They reduce the risk of heart problems, increase strength and endurance and improve motor skills and flexibility. In other words, a person who exercises is more fit and healthier.

Why are preteens and teens less active than preteens and teens of previous generations? Today's lifestyle is a major contributor. Preteens and teens watch TV, talk on the telephone, ride in cars and sit at their desks at school—all activities that don't use much energy. Walking, participatory sports, active games and dancing are not regular parts of preteens' and teens' lives. (3)

Often, preteens and teens don't understand the importance of exercise. When they *do* see the importance, they don't know how much is enough. They need both the incentive and the information to exercise well. Parents can supply them with both.

Meeting ideas

Consult "Plan your parenting meetings carefully" and "Choose meeting activities" in the leader's guide for background information. Also refer to the meeting cards on nutrition, smoking, alcohol, drugs and stress since they are all related to fitness and general health.

Energizers

Myths/facts (20 minutes)

Goal: **To inform parents about the benefits of regular exercise and dispel some common myths about exercise and physical activity.**

Tools: **Chalkboard and chalk or a flipchart and marker. Prepare copies of the "Exercise: Myths and facts" quiz using the true/false statements and answers below. Put statements on one side of the handout sheet and answers on the other.**

Method: **Hand out the quiz. Ask participants not to look at the answers. Ask them to write down their responses to the following statements. After participants finish the quiz, discuss the answers. Encourage participation. For example, say, "On number 3, what was your answer? Why do you think that's so?"**

True/false statements:

1) **Exercise may help you quit smoking.**
2) **Jogging is less dangerous than walking fast.**
3) **To get the full benefit of exercise, a person should exercise 25 to 40 minutes a day at least six days a week.**
4) **Physical inactivity is related to heart disease.**
5) **Exercising three times a week gives you all the physical activity that you need.**
6) **Exercising makes you tired.**
7) **You have to be athletic to exercise.**
8) **All exercises give the same benefit.**
9) **Exercising affects only your health.**

Answers:

1) ***True.*** **People who exercise vigorously and regularly are more likely to cut down or stop cigarette smoking.**

2) ***False.*** **Fast walking is easier on the body than jogging. It doesn't put as much pressure on the lower legs and feet as jogging does. Walking *does* require more time—40 minutes as opposed to 25 for jogging—to have the same effect on the heart.**

3) ***False.*** **To get the full benefit of exercise, you should exercise 25 to 40 minutes a day, depending on the exercise, at least *three* days a week.**

4) ***True.*** **People who are inactive are at greater risk of getting heart disease than people who are physically active. Regular, brisk, sustained exercise improves overall conditioning.**

5) ***False.*** **Make physical activity more important in your life—use the stairs, walk to the store, dance—and you will *feel* better and *look* better.**

6) ***False.*** **As people get in shape, they have more energy than before. They find it easier to sleep at night and are less tired during the day.**

7) ***False.*** **Most brisk activities do not require any special athletic ability. In fact, many people who found school sports difficult enjoy other activities such as walking, jogging, bicycling, racquet sports and swimming and continue them throughout life.**

8) ***False.*** **In order to condition the body and become more fit a person needs *regular, brisk, sustained* exercise such as fast walking, jogging, swimming, soccer or dancing. These are all *aerobic* exercises. Aerobic exercise strengthens and conditions the muscles and heart and stimulates deep breathing. Other kinds of exercise such as weight lifting build muscles but don't make the person any more fit. Some, such as golf, baseball or football, don't keep the activity level high for long enough to be of use in conditioning the heart.**

9) ***False.*** **There are many other benefits to exercise or any physical activity. Exercise reduces stress, fatigue, anxiety, depression and tension and helps one to relax. It improves self-image and helps control appetite. When a family exercises together, they can strengthen family ties and have fun too!**

(Continued on page 2)

Warm-up (15 minutes)

Goal: To arouse parents' interest in physical activity and teach them about its benefits.

Tools: Tape recorder and tape of music with a strong beat.

Method: Explain that since the meeting topic is physical activity and fitness, the parents are going to be physically active! Give the following instructions and *lead* them in the exercises. Tell the participants to do only as much as they feel comfortable doing. Those with heart problems should decline. While exercising, explain the benefits of each exercise.

1) *Head rolls.* Stand up. Roll your head slowly—to the front, to the left, to the back and to the right. Repeat three times. Change directions. This exercise stretches tense muscles in the neck, helping the person to relax.

2) *Waist stretch.* Hold arms out to the sides in line with your shoulders. Twist to the left, stretching your arms as far as they will go. Now twist toward the right. Repeat four times. This stretches the abdominal muscles and helps to reduce tension in the abdomen.

3) *Group walk.* Follow the leader around the room, down the hall, outside (weather permitting) and back in. Walk quickly, but don't run. This exercise, if done for 40 minutes, three days a week, will strengthen the heart and allow it to work more efficiently.

4) *Back massage.* Form groups of three. The one in the middle bends over from the waist. The other two pound—not too vigorously!!!—on the bent one's back with little karate chops up to the neck, down to the waist, up to the neck and down again. Trade places so that all get the massage. This helps loosen any tight spots in the back and feels good too!

Supply water for those who are thirsty. *Go on to the core meeting activity.*

Core meeting activity

Role playing (1 hour)

Goal: To help parents mold the fitness habits of their preteens and teens by improving their communication skills.

Tools: Chalkboard and chalk, the *Talking skills/Listening skills* reproducible included in this box.

Method: Hand out *Talking skills/Listening skills.* Discuss the various ways to improve communication that it suggests. Tell the group they will be *practicing* these skills by role playing. Ask them all to consider some situation they have had involving their own or their children's fitness habits such as driving the car when they could have walked, eating poorly, sitting in front of the television on a nice day, wanting to sit out of gym class.

Divide the participants into groups of three. One will play the child, one will play the parent and one will be an observer. The "child" will choose a situation and explain it to the other two members of the group, and the "parent" and the "child" will act out possible responses to the child. Allow the role-playing to continue for five minutes, then stop it on time.

Ask the parent characters and the child characters to describe how it felt to be their characters. Ask the observers to report what happened between the parent and child characters. Ask each group to switch roles and try a different scenario, so that all participants have a chance to be child, parent and observer. After the final role playing, have all the subgroups come back together and encourage the reunited group to discuss the experience and what they learned. Ask questions such as "Was it hard listening to the other person and really understanding what they meant or how they felt?" or "What kinds of things stood in the way of communication?" Sum up the discussion and congratulate the players on their efforts.

Tips for parents

- **Expose your children to a variety of sports and activities**—team sports such as soccer or baseball, individual sports such as swimming or gymnastics and activities such as hiking or aerobic dancing. Often children are not active because they haven't found a sport or activity that interests them.
- **Teach your children that winning is nice but not necessary.** If they like a sport, they will continue playing whether or not they win. Encourage noncompetitive activities such as biking, walking or yoga.
- **Encourage your children to participate in aerobic exercise.** Preteens and teens need 15-30 minutes of continuous *aerobic* activity daily. Aerobics exercise the muscles, condition and strengthen the heart and stimulate deep breathing. Aerobic exercise is *vital* for building a healthy body.
- **Make physical activity a part of your family routine.** Walk after dinner with the whole family. Leave the dishes for later—family health and togetherness is more important! Plan hiking trips in parks or go biking together. Develop an interest in square dancing!
- **Set a good example.** Take the stairs instead of the elevator up two flights or down three. Walk to the store instead of driving. Dance instead of watching television. Join a health club and work out.
- **Teach your child that being active is not just for athletes.** Let them see that being active can be fun.

References

1—*Concerns,* Council of Chief State School Officers, Resource Center on Educational Equity, Issue XXVIII, October 1989.

2—*The Brown University Child Behavior and Development Letter,* February 1990.

3—*Food Fight: A Report on Teenagers' Eating Habits and Nutritional Status,* by Laurie Olsen, Citizens' Policy Center, 1984.

Resources

For the leader or parent

- *FactSheets* on exercise, National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, Building 31, Room 4A21, Bethesda, MD 20892; (301) 496-4236. Free.
- For pamphlets on prevention of and first aid for heart attacks, write to: American Heart Association, National Center 7320; Greenville Ave., Dallas, TX 75231. Free.
- *Fitness,* a complete, ready-to-print resource on the important fitness topics: aerobics, goal setting, family fitness, stretching and flexibility, anaerobic exercise, injury prevention and treatment, running, walking, cycling, water workouts and tips on exercise equipment, shoes and planning. Write: Parlay International, 5900 Hollis St., Suite Q, Emeryville, CA 94608. Telephone orders accepted at (415) 601-1000. Cost: $99 plus $5 shipping; order publication No. 1002.
- Fitness Group supplies booklets on sports and fitness. To send for a catalog, write: Fitness Group, PO Box 705, Santa Barbara, CA 93102; (805) 969-4004.
- The *Fitnessgram* program is a computerized measure of students' fitness. Each report card includes, along with the personal fitness measure, suggested exercises for improving fitness and body strength in the needed areas. For a *Fitnessgram* program for your school, write: Youth Fitness, Institute for Aerobics Research, 12200 Preston Rd., Dallas, TX 75230; (214) 701-8001. Cost: $15 for software cards, plus $3 for shipping and handling.

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PARENTING

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AS THE BODY CHANGES: HYGIENE

Objectives

- To get parents to recognize the importance of good hygiene for their children
- To inform parents about adolescent hygiene
- To give parents suggestions for helping their children practice good hygiene

The facts

When children enter puberty, their bodies change:

- New sweat glands develop under their arms and in the groin, causing adolescents to perspire more. (1)
- Hair grows on the legs, in the groin and, for males, on the face.
- Oil glands on the face, shoulders and back produce more oil, sometimes clogging pores and producing acne.
- Menstruation begins.

Preteens and teens are changing in other ways too, in ways that affect their hygiene habits. They may wear braces, eat more junk food and chew more gum, which increases the need for proper dental care. They are more concerned about their physical image so they buy more cosmetics, fancy shampoos, perfumes and lotions. Often they are attracted to the glamorous image of a product more than to its effect. Sometimes these products produce the desired result, but often they cause skin irritations or cover up a problem with perfumes.

For preteens and teens the physical and lifestyle changes of puberty often cause embarrassment and confusion. These changes can affect their self-image, leading to serious emotional problems. Luckily, most problems can be alleviated by simple changes in hygiene habits to accommodate the "new" adolescent body.

Meeting ideas

Consult "Plan your parenting meetings carefully" and "Choose meeting activities" in the leader's guide for background information. Also consult the meeting cards on nutrition and fitness since these topics are related to hygiene and personal appearance. Make copies of the "Tips" and the "Resources" at the end of this card, so that parents, preteens and teens will have the basic information that they need.

Energizers

Start off with an energizer and get your audience's interest right away!

Hygiene brainstorm (15-20 minutes)

Goal: **To explore advertising messages about hygiene and beauty and to point out their relation to actual hygiene.**

Tools: **A variety of popular magazines, enough copies for each meeting participant. Magazines that cater to preteens and teens would be helpful. Three poster boards and easels to hang up many advertisements from the magazines, several rolls of tape.**

Method: **Divide the audience into three groups. Explain to the groups that they are going to perform a race. Their object is to create a "Buy me!" poster with advertisements culled from the magazines you've provided. The ads must be for hygiene or beauty products such as deodorant, tampons, shampoos, cologne or toothpaste. Each group will have an equal-size poster board to fill and equal numbers of rolls of tape, magazines and participants. The first group to finish wins the race. To make the effort a little more exciting you might furnish a prize such as a carton of soap. Give them 30 seconds to prepare. Time the activity. Tell them to start the race. Once the first group finishes its poster, stop the race. Tell the three groups how long it took to fill up the first poster board. Observe how far the others got on their posters. Ask the participants what they observed about the exercise. What about the number of ads? Do the ads seem to have any common themes? How do they feel about the ads? What do they think children and teens might feel about the ads? Are the ads misleading? Ask the participants to identify products that are not likely to lead to better hygiene. For instance, many products contain perfumes that can be irritating to the skin. The hygienic quality of many products, such as douches, is questionable. Many products do not produce the "magical" effect that they claim to produce. *Go on to the core meeting activity.***

Core meeting activities

Discussion (30 minutes)

Goal: To teach parents about the changing hygiene needs of their adolescents.

Tools: Type "Tips" below. Copy and distribute it for meeting participants.

Method: Invite both parents and their preteens or teens. Pass out "Tips." Discuss each tip on the list. Ask for additional comments.

Role playing (1 hour)

Goal: To help parents practice communicating with their preteens and teens about hygiene.

Tools: Prepare four handouts: use the reproducibles *Helping children like themselves* and *Talking skills/ Listening skills* from this box, and type up the role-playing situations and "Tips" from below. Chalkboard and chalk.

Method: In preparation for your meeting, read the four handouts. At the meeting distribute the handouts. Discuss the various ways to improve communication that *Talking skills/*

Listening skills suggests. Discuss the role that self-esteem plays in a person's appearance. Tell the group they will be *practicing* communication skills by role playing. Divide the participants into four groups. Assign each group *one* of the role-playing activities to present to the group as a whole. Give them 10-15 minutes to discuss it, choose the role-playing "actors" and plan their presentation. Tell each group that they'll have five minutes to present. Reassemble the large group and have the first group start with their role playing. Limit the role playing to five minutes, even if it means cutting it short. Start a discussion about the "parents'" action—how else could the situation have been handled? Go on to the next group and then the third. After all the role playing has been finished and discussed, ask the group for its thoughts about the meeting as a whole. Sum up the points made in the meeting.

- Thomas, 14, has always had to be forced to take baths. His parents didn't force him when he was a child because he never got *very* dirty. However, now that he has reached puberty, he perspires more and has a strong odor. What can his parents do?
- Bob, 13, got braces a few months ago. He is embarrassed to have them and doesn't want to be any more different than he already feels. So, he chews gum and eats all the food he has been warned not to eat. His parents, who have already spent a fortune on his braces, don't want him to have fillings in his newly straightened teeth. What can they do?
- Debra, 12, started her period recently. How can her mother explain good hygiene habits with the least amount of embarrassment for both of them?

Tips for parents and preteens or teens

Teach your children what to expect as they go through adolescence. Also tell them what the opposite sex is experiencing.

- **Teeth.** Brush teeth three times a day after each meal. Floss daily. This cleans teeth *and* reduces mouth odor so that a mouthwash is not necessary. Have teeth cleaned professionally twice a year. (2)
- **Tobacco.** Don't smoke! In addition to causing lung cancer and heart problems, smoking causes discolored teeth and bad breath. Also, avoid smokeless tobacco. In addition to causing cancers of the oral cavity, pharynx, larynx and esophagus, smokeless tobacco causes gum tissue damage, bad breath and discolored teeth. (3)
- **Perspiration.** If you eat well, bathe daily and are healthy, your body odor should not be offensive. However, if you wish, use an underarm deodorant. If you perspire a lot, use antiperspirant on the underarms. Bathe regularly, with hot water and soap, especially after exercise. Wear clean clothes. (1) (2)
- **Acne** occurs when the oil glands get clogged with oil and is at its worst in adolescence, when the hormones are in flux. It is *not* caused by eating chocolates or greasy foods, although dietary changes or a food allergy could intensify the problem. If you find that your acne is worse after eating a certain food, stop eating it! Keep your face *clean*. If you have very oily skin, wash it five or six times a day. Cosmetics can aggravate the problem. Wash off makeup thoroughly in the evening. Don't pick or squeeze pimples since this can lead to scars and infection. Apply hot wet towels to the skin to soften the oil and release it from the pores, then clean your skin. If your problem is serious, see a dermatologist. (1) (2) (4)

Tips for girls

- **Breast self-examination.** Examine your breasts every month after your period. It's an easy way to detect breast cancer early and a good habit to start now. Also, it's important to be aware of what is normal and healthy in your body, so that when something changes you will be able to identify it.
- **Menstruation.** Use a tampon or sanitary pad or both, depending on the flow and your preference. You can and should do anything you normally do—ride horses, take gym class and exercise. Bathe daily. Change your tampon or pad every three to four hours. *Don't douche*—you could push some blood back up into the sterile uterus and cause a serious infection. Drink and eat anything you want.
- **Toxic shock.** Know the symptoms for toxic shock since it has been linked to tampon use. The main symptoms are sudden fever, vomiting and a sudden drop in blood pressure. If you develop these symptoms, remove the tampon and see your doctor immediately. To prevent toxic shock, don't use tampons. If you must use them, change them every three to four hours and don't wear them at night.
- **PMS.** Avoid sugar and salt since they have been linked to premenstrual syndrome (PMS). Exercise can help relieve cramps. Avoid stress. (1) (4)

Tips for boys

- **Shaving.** Be careful not to nick pimples because this could cause an infection. If you use a razor instead of an electric shaver, use a lot of shaving cream.
- **Testicle exam.** Examine your testicles every month. It's an easy way to detect testicle cancer early and a good habit to start now. Also, it's important to be aware of what is normal and healthy in your body, so that if something changes you will be able to identify it. A good description of the procedure is available in *What's Happening to My Body? Book for Boys* by Lynda Madaras. Further protect your testicles and prevent chafing by not wearing tight pants. Wear an athletic supporter when playing sports.

References

1—*What's Happening to My Body?* by Lynda Madaras, Newmarket Press.

2—*Looking Great, Feeling Great* discussion guide, Sunburst Communications.

3—*Community Awareness Aids*, National Children's Dental Health Month, February 1985.

4—*Family Life Educator Selected Articles, vol. 1-3*, Network Publications.

Resources

Some of these books or films might be available in your local library. If not, request them!

For the leader or parent:

- *Looking Great, Feeling Great*, by Sunburst Communications, is a set of two filmstrips that describe to preteens and teens how to take care of themselves. These would be good to start a discussion when the preteens and teens are present. Sunburst Communications, Room TJ 7, 39 Washington Ave., Pleasantville, NY 10570. (800) 431-1934; (914) 769-5030 (NY). Cost: $109. Available on a 30-day review basis.

For the preteen and teen:

- *Don't Worry, You're Normal: A Teenager's Guide to Self-Health* by Nissa Simon is a book that covers many questions of hygiene, fitness and body changes for preteens and teens. Crowell Junior Books, Harper & Row, Inc., 10 E. 53rd Street, New York, NY 10022; (212) 207-7000. Cost: $9.95 hardback, $4.95 paperback.
- *What's Happening to My Body? Book for Boys* by Lynda Madaras is an excellent general reference for boys. Newmarket Press, 3 E. 48th Street, New York, NY 10017. Cost: $14.95 hardback, $9.95 paperback.
- *What's Happening to My Body?* by Lynda Madaras is an excellent reference for girls and their mothers on going through puberty. Newmarket Press, 3 E. 48th St., New York, NY 10017; (212) 832-3575. Cost: $14.95 hardback, $9.95 paperback.

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PARENTING

The Underdeveloped Skill

NUTRITION: WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

Objectives

- To give parents information on good nutrition
- To explain why adolescents often don't eat well
- To give parents tips to help their preteens or teens develop healthy eating habits

The facts

- The U.S. population ranks as the world's fattest. Obesity among young people increased by 54 percent in the past 20 years. Seven of 10 obese teenagers will be obese adults and suffer high risk of diabetes, heart disease and high blood pressure. (1)
- Anorexia nervosa and bulimia are eating disorders that can affect young people. Recent studies indicate that 3 to 5 percent of women between puberty and age 30 suffer from bulimia, and 1 percent suffer from anorexia nervosa. (2)
- Many adolescents with high cholesterol levels already have fatty streaks in their arteries. Sixty-four percent of teens are not aware of what serum cholesterol means to their health, and half do not read nutrition and ingredient labels on food. (1)

Adolescence is a time of rapid physical growth. Preteens and teens need to eat well now more than at almost any other time in their lives. They need more of most nutrients. Yet fad diets are on the rise, posing potential physical and emotional dangers.

Clearly, the nutritional standards of preteens and teens must improve. Knowing proper eating habits helps. See the "Resources" section for books and pamphlets on nutrition.

But just *knowing* the information is not enough. Why don't many preteens and teens eat well? There are many reasons: Many preteens and teens do not see the importance of a proper diet beyond their appearance. Even preteens and teens who know about good nutrition often feel immune to the possible ill effects of poor diet. When they do see the importance of proper eating habits, they often don't follow them because of the pressures exerted by their age group and its lifestyle. Preteens and teens see arguments about food as one of the "great divides" between them and their parents—one of the ways in which they can and must assert their independence.

Since so many of adolescents' meals are eaten outside the home, parents cannot directly determine what their children eat. They *can* make sure their children understand nutrition and its effect on their health and appearance. They can also help their children develop good habits. In these ways parents can help their children make good food choices when they are away from their parents.

Meeting ideas

Consult "Plan your parenting meetings carefully" and "Choose meeting activities" in the leader's guide for background information. Also consult the meeting cards on fitness for information and resources. Remember that fitness and nutrition are closely linked.

Energizers

Myths/facts (20 minutes)

Goal: **To inform parents about nutrition.**

Tools: **Produce two handouts. Type the true/false statements below on the front of handout and the answers on the back. For the second handout, type up and copy the "Tips for parents" section of this card. Supply paper and pen for all the participants.**

Method: **Form groups of four to five people. Give each group paper and pen and the first handout. Ask each group to discuss and write down an answer for each true/false statement without referring to the answers. Ask all questions and get group responses before giving the correct answers. Explain each answer. See which group has the highest score. Congratulate all on their effort. Pass out the "Tips for parents" and discuss them. *Go on to the core meeting activity.***

True/false statements:

1) **Popcorn is junk food.**
2) **Cooked vegetables are more nutritious than raw vegetables.**
3) **Pizza is more nutritious than a plain hamburger.**
4) **Preteens and teens need more food per pound of their body weight than 8-year-olds do.**
5) **A person can safely lose up to five pounds per week.**
6) **Preteens and teens should be allowed to eat whatever they want.**

Answers:

1) ***False.*** **Popcorn is a recommended snack food, when unsalted and unbuttered.**
2) ***False.*** **Vitamins are lost in the cooking process. For most vegetables, with the exception of certain greens, uncooked are more nutritious.**
3) ***True.*** **Pizza contains the four basic food groups, unlike hamburgers. However, both are high in sodium.**
4) ***True.*** **The growth spurt that starts at puberty requires more food, and more nutritious food, than most other times in a person's life.**
5) ***False.*** **Contrary to the claims of many fad diet ads, people can safely lose up to *two* pounds per week. If they lose more, they may be losing muscle instead of fat.**
6) ***False.*** **Parents should set reasonable limits for their preteens and teens. This is best done through discussion. Adolescents are more likely to follow guidelines that they understand than seemingly arbitrary orders. (3) (4) (5)**

Four food groups (20 minutes)

Goal: **To explain basic nutrition to the participants.**

Tools: **Put up a poster of the four basic food groups or write the names of the four groups on the board. Write the name of particular foods such as broccoli, swiss cheese, peanut butter or yogurt on slips of paper. Make enough slips for all meeting participants and make equal numbers of slips for each of the four food groups.**

Method: **Pass out the slips to participants as they enter the**

(Continued on page 2)

room. Tell them that they *are* the food that is written on the paper and that they have to join the other foods in their food group. All the breads and cereals will form one group, meats another group, etc. After the participants have formed their groups, ask them to discuss among themselves what the foods they represent have in common. Then have each food group share their discussion with the other participants. Be prepared to answer questions or correct misinformation. Once each group has explained what they are, have them regroup to form a balanced meal. One "meat" person should join one "fruit and vegetable" person, one "bread" person and one "milk" person. Have each group tell what their meal is to the group as a whole. Have the participants decide which is the most nutritious meal and why. Ask how they could change any of the meals to make them more nutritious. Explain that balanced meals are a good start, but they also need to reduce fat and salt. Mention that preteens or teens often don't have a balanced lunch, so they need a balanced dinner with fruits, vegetables and milk that may be missing in earlier meals. *Go on to the core meeting activity.*

Core meeting activities

Panel (1 hour)

Goal: To answer questions parents have about eating disorders such as anorexia nervosa and bulimia and the physical benefits of a healthy diet.

Tools: Chairs, table, podium and/or microphones for the panel. Make a handout of the "Tips for parents" below.

Method: Invite a nutritionist from the health department or the school, a doctor or nurse, and a psychologist, preferably a specialist in adolescents and/or in eating disorders. ● The nutritionist could talk about general nutrition as it relates to adolescents. ● The doctor or nurse could discuss the changing adolescent body, the importance of eating well at this time, the effect of diet on menses and growth, and physical disorders caused by improper diet. ● The psychologist could talk about such topics as the effect of diet on emotional health; how to instill good, long-lasting eating habits; and how eating disorders can be caused by unrealistic and obsessive concerns with a slender appearance.

Each panel member should speak for 10-15 minutes. When all are through, questions can be directed to the panelists.

Nutritious potluck (2 hours)

Goal: To get families interested in making good nutritional habits part of their daily life.

Tools: The school cafeteria or a volunteer's home where a potluck dinner can be served. Plates, utensils, foodserving equipment, copies of all the recipes used.

Method: Organize a volunteer committee to prepare several nutritious and appetizing dishes. Be sure that your recipes are low in sodium, sugars and fats and high in fiber and include fresh and wholesome ingredients. There are many cookbooks and pamphlets containing such recipes, like *Tips* from the American Heart Association. Advertise your potluck at a PTA meeting, in your newsletter or in invitational fliers sent home with the children in your school. Hand out copies of the recipes. Invite a nutritionist to speak to your potluck participants about how they can start improving their diet.

Tips for parents

- Give your children a choice in buying food for the household. Send them to the store to pick up food for the family. As they get older, make the instructions less specific, so that they can make decisions. Alert them to check labels for ingredients. Remind them that ingredients are listed in order of quantity.
- Supply nutritious snack foods such as popcorn, fruit, raw vegetables, cheese, yogurt, whole wheat crackers and milk.
- If your children have a weight problem, talk to their doctor about it. The doctor can suggest a diet and help supervise it. Help your children follow the diet by purchasing nutritious, low-calorie snack foods such as fruit, vegetables and popcorn. Most preteens and teens worry about their weight, whether or not they tell their parents. If your preteens or teens are overweight, don't belabor the issue. Give them positive support. If they're on a diet and exercise program, encourage them to be patient and not to expect immediate results. Don't look on occasional lapses as failures.
- Serve low-fat milk, vegetables and fruit at night to supplement the fast food that your teens eat during the day.
- Set a good example. Cut back on eating poorly, drinking alcoholic beverages and smoking cigarettes. Add exercise such as walking, biking or swimming to your life.

References

1—*Nutrition Action Healthletter*, Center for Science in the Public Interest, February 27, 1990.

2—*New York Times*, February 9, 1990.

3—*Academy's New Nutrition Handbook*, American Academy of Pediatrics news release, February 21, 1986.

4—"Fast Foods: Too Much Saturated Fat?" *Child Health Alert*, December 1985.

5—*Factsheets Nutrition*, Information and Resource Center, Pennsylvania State University, 1981.

Resources

For the leader or parent:

- National Association of Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders, Box 271, Highland Park, IL 60035; (312) 831-3438.
- *Fast Food: An Eater's Guide* by Michael F. Jacobson and Sarah Fritschner. For those who want the complete lowdown on the nutritional content of fast foods, this book contains breakdowns of virtually all items offered by more than one dozen chains. Write: CSPI-PD, 1501 16th St. NW, Washington, DC 20036-1499. Cost: $5.95; order publication #FF.
- *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* as well as general pamphlets on hamburger facts, salt facts and food safety for the family are available from: Human Nutrition Information Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Room 325A, Federal Building, Hyattsville, MD 20782; (301) 436-8617. Free.
- *FactSheets* are an excellent source of information about a variety of nutrition topics. Write: Penn State Nutrition Information and Resource Center, Benedict House, University Park, PA 16802. Cost: $7.50.

For speakers or general information on nutrition, contact:

- State health departments, nutrition division
- Cooperative extension service, county or state
- Doctors, pediatricians or internists
- Adolescent psychologists, especially specialists in eating disorders
- School counselors
- Nutrition teachers in the school
- Local newspapers, especially food and nutrition editors

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PARENTING

The Underdeveloped Skill

Objectives

- To get parents to explore their *own* values regarding teenage sexuality
- To present facts on the incidence of sexual activity and teenage pregnancy to parents
- To present parents with concrete suggestions on how to talk with their kids about sex

The facts

- Approximately 80 percent of parents never talk to their children about sex. Most adolescents report that they have never been given any advice about sex by either parent; in a survey of 600 teenagers about their source of family planning, teenagers cited television more often than any other source. (1)
- Studies indicate that children whose parents have talked with them about sexuality are less likely to engage in premarital sex or if they do so are more likely to make use of contraception. (2)
- Three thousand adolescents become pregnant *every day;* that's 1.1 million teen pregnancies each year. The sharpest increase in recent years has been among teens age 15 and younger. (1)
- Pregnancy and birth rates among teens in the United States have declined after increases in the 1970s. In 1983, 87 of every 1,000 girls 15 through 19 years old became pregnant. This is a decline of 1.6 percent from the 1980 rate. Fewer than 53 of every 1,000 teenage girls gave birth, a drop of 2.3 percent. Even with this drop, the United States still leads other industrialized countries in teen pregnancy and birth rates. (3)
- One out of every five 15-year-old girls and one out of every three 15-year-old boys are sexually active. Twelve million American teens are sexually active—about 7 million males and 5 million females. About 15 million teens are *not* sexually active. (4)
- The age of first menstruation has been dropping three months every 10 years during the last century, due to better nutrition and health care. Today the average age of becoming fertile for girls is 12 years and five months, and some girls have their first periods as early as nine. Boys may have their first "wet dream" by age 11. (5) (6)

Parents *can* talk to their children about sex. *Only parents* can convey the family and religious values they would like their children to have. And no one is better suited to the job.

Parents can spare children from many fears and misconceptions by open communication about growing up and sexuality. To act responsibly, teens need information and guidance from their parents. If parents don't communicate about sexuality, children will get their ideas and information from other sources. These sources may be unreliable and cannot be expected to convey the parents' own values.

Meeting ideas

Select from the following ideas to achieve your meeting goals. For background information consult "Plan your parenting meetings carefully" and "Choose meeting activities" in the leader's guide.

Energizers

Start your meeting off with an energizer to get your audience's interest right away!

Where it's at: Pass the hat (25 minutes)

***Goal:* To get audience members thinking about what their parents taught them about sexuality and what they would like to teach *their* children.**

***Tools:* Bring enough 3"x5" cards and pencils for each member of your audience and a "hat" for participants to drop their cards into. Make sure every participant has a pencil.**

***Method:* Assure the audience that the activity is anonymous. Ask each person to write one thing that their parents told them about sexuality during their teens on the unlined side of the card. (2 to 3 minutes)**

Then ask each participant to turn the card over and complete the following sentence: "If I were completely free to say what I really believe about sex and how I think my child should behave in regard to sex, I would say the following." (5 minutes)

Collect the cards in the "hat." Read the unlined side of several cards first, then read several cards from the lined side of the cards. No need to pause between them. After reading cards with various points of view, ask the group to comment on the thoughts expressed in the cards. Wrap up the activity by summarizing the thoughts expressed in the cards and any discussion by the group. (10 minutes) *Move on to your core meeting activity.*

Quiz (15 minutes)

***Goal:* To put parents in touch with their knowledge about puberty and sexuality, to educate parents and to engage their interest.**

***Tools:* Copies of *Sex and sexuality—a quiz* from your parenting box for each audience member, pencils.**

Method:* Tell audience members that the quiz is for their information and will not be collected. Ask the audience to take five minutes to answer the questions. When the quiz is completed, go through each question and answer. Be prepared to elaborate on the answers, and ask audience members to feel free to ask questions or make comments on the quiz. *Go on to your core meeting activity.

Core meeting activities

Film (1½ hours)

Goal: To make parents aware of the concerns and problems that preteens and teens face in dealing with their sexual development and feelings.

Tools: Use the film *The Puberty Years* for your meeting. *The Puberty Years* helps young teens understand the various changes their bodies undergo during puberty. Using humorous vignettes, animated graphics and on-screen group discussion, it provides facts and ways to cope with emerging sexual feelings. The film shows viewers that despite the confusion, self-

consciousness and embarrassment they may feel, puberty is a normal, healthy part of growing up. The videocassette, 33 minutes long, is divided into two parts. *Alfred, Jamie and Steve* explores male physical changes during puberty. It discusses body growth and maturation, how the genitals and reproductive system develop and the reasons why spontaneous erection, ejaculation and "wet dreams" may occur. *Lynn, Kerry and Hillary* explains bodily changes in females during puberty. It raises such issues as different rates of development and embarrassment about menstruation. This part focuses on social and emotional problems that girls may encounter during puberty. (To order films see "Resources/For the leader" below.)

Method: Before showing the film, take time to view it. You will want to know what the film is about in order to be prepared to lead a discussion following it. Tell your audience that you would like to show them a film. Briefly state what the film is about—no more than one or two sentences. Let the audience know that you'd like the film to be the starting ground for a discussion. Show the film. After the film, ask the audience to comment. Encourage discussion with questions referring to events, ideas and values expressed in the film, such as "What were your feelings about . . .?" "What's your reaction to . . .?" "What did you learn from the film?" "Do you agree with . . .? If so, why?"

Role playing (45 minutes)

Goal: To help parents practice their communication skills.

Tools: Reproduce the *Talking skills/Listening skills* handout and distribute it to the group. Also, compose and hand out sheets describing three role-playing situations. (See five choices below.) Set up the room so that participants can easily break into groups of three.

Method: Introduce the group to the *Talking skills/Listening skills* handout and discuss the various ways to improve communication it suggests. Tell the group that they will be *practicing* these methods by role playing. Select three role-playing situations from among the following list, or develop your own role-playing situations.

- Barry, 13, has been caught masturbating by his father, Herb. What might Herb's reaction be? Barry's feelings? What could Herb do to handle this situation constructively?
- Jean, 15, has just come in at 2:30 a.m. from a date with her new boyfriend. Her curfew was midnight. Jean's mother, Ann, is waiting up for her. How could Ann handle the situation to achieve a satisfactory outcome?
- On the way home from basketball practice, Robert, 17, announces to his mother that he is in love with a girl his parents don't like. How could she react constructively?
- Tina, 9, asks Helen, her girlfriend's mother, what a period is. How could Helen respond?
- Angela, 16, asks her mother, Sharon, about contraception. How can Sharon react in order to open communication with Angela about her concerns?

Ask the participants to break into groups of three. For each role playing there will be an observer, a parent and a child. The three participants in each group will get to play a child, a parent and an observer by rotating these characters as the role-playing situation changes. Ask observers to note the progress of each role playing; for instance, what communication problems did the parent and child encounter?

Allow each role-playing situation to continue for five minutes. End each role playing on time. After each role playing, ask the parent character and the child character to describe how it felt to be their characters. Ask the observers to report what happened between the parent and child characters. Hold a brief discussion. Then ask each group to rotate parent, child and observer roles within their group and begin the next role playing. After the final role playing, bring the group back together to discuss the experience and what they learned. Be ready to ask questions such as: "What made it hard to listen to the other person?" or "What kinds of things stood in the way of communication?" Sum up the discussion and congratulate the players on their efforts.

Resources

For the leader:

- *Sex and the American Teenager.* 32 minutes. Pyramid Film & Video, Box 1048, Santa Monica, CA 90406-1048; (800) 421-2304. Rental: $52 for three days.
- *The Puberty Years.* 33 minutes. Order from: Sunburst Communications, 101 Castleton St., Pleasantville, NY 10570-9971; (800) 431-1934. Cost for purchase: $205. All Sunburst films are available for a free 30-day review.
- *Preventing Children Having Children.* This informative pamphlet gives many statistics on adolescent sexuality. A must resource. Children's Defense Fund, 122 C St. NW, Washington, DC 20001. Cost: $4.50.

For the parent:

- *How to Talk to Your Teenagers about the Facts of Life* is available from Planned Parenthood, 810 Seventh Ave., New York, NY 10019. Cost: 75 cents each, $35 for 100.
- *How to Talk to Your Child About Sex* and *How to Talk to Your Preteen/Teen about Sex* are available from the National PTA, 700 N. Rush St., Chicago, IL 60611-2571. Cost: 15 cents per copy; $12.00 per 100.

For the child/preteen/teen:

- *What's Happening to My Body?* by Lynda Madaras and Area Madaras and *The What's Happening to My Body Book for Boys* by Lynda Madaras and Dane Saavedra are excellent books for parents and children to share. Newmarket Press, 3 E. 48th St., New York, NY 10017. Cost: $14.95 hardback, $9.95 paperback.
- *Teensex? It's OK to Say NO WAY.* This easy-to-read pamphlet is available from Planned Parenthood. Planned Parenthood, 810 Seventh Ave., New York, NY 10019. Cost: 75 cents each; $30 for 100.
- *Clear Vision* is the story of Zap, a 16-year-old boy who has gotten his girlfriend pregnant but doesn't want to do anything about it. But with the help of magic glasses it's Zap who's pregnant. Only then does he realize what teen pregnancy really means. Highly recommended. March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation, Supply Division, 1275 Mamaroneck Ave., White Plains, NY 10605; (914) 428-7100. Comes with three posters and a showing guide. Cost: $50 VHS, $95 16mm. Rental: $10 for one week, 16mm only.
- *Rockabye* dramatizes teen pregnancy in a contemporary high school setting. Shows the unglamorous consequences of having a baby as a teen. Ideal for teens and preteens. Contact the March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation, Supply Division, 1275 Mamaroneck Ave., White Plains, NY 10605; (914) 428-7100. Cost: $50 VHS. Not available for rent.

References

1—*Talk, Listen, Care Kit,* Harvard Community Health Plan Foundation, 1989.

2—*Sexuality Education Strategy and Resource Guide: Programs for Parents,* by Toni Clark, PhD, and Pamela M. Wilson, MSW, The Center for Population Options, 1983.

3—*New York Times,* October 20, 1987.

4—*Preventing Children Having Children,* Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Clearinghouse, The Children's Defense Fund, 1986.

5—*How to Help Your Teenager Postpone Sexual Involvement,* Marion Howard, Continuum Publishing Co., 1989.

6—*Human Sexuality: The Family Resource Book,* by Sharon Goldsmith, RN, The C. V. Mosby Company, 1986.

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PARENTING

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BUILDING CHILDREN'S SELF-ESTEEM

Objectives

- To show parents how to build their children's self-esteem
- To give suggestions for improving communication in order to be more successful in building preteens' and teens' self-esteem
- To show the importance of self-esteem in resisting peer pressure and developing good health habits

The facts

- Self-esteem affects grades. A child with a high IQ but low self-esteem may do poorly in school, while a child with average intelligence but high self-esteem may excel. (1)
- A negative body image, which is common in adolescence, is related to low self-esteem. This can cause depression, chronic dieting, compulsive exercise and eating disorders. A person who is concerned only about body image ignores his or her mental, emotional and social development. (2)
- Adolescents feel more socially, physically and intellectually inept than any other age group. When adolescents feel unimportant, they have difficulty making decisions and plans. (1) (3)
- Preteens and teens with low self-esteem feel powerless. They are more vulnerable to peer pressure and may not have the strength to say "no" when peers ask them to drink, take drugs or engage in sex.
- Eighty percent of students entering school feel good about themselves and who they are. By the fifth grade only 20 percent have high self-esteem. By the time students become seniors in high school only 5 percent have positive self-esteem. (4)
- Students encounter the equivalent of 60 days each year of reprimanding, nagging and punishment. During 12 years of schooling a student is subjected to 15,000 negative statements, three times the amount of positive statements received. (4)
- Self-esteem is closely tied to family and environment. When children feel *listened to, taken seriously and genuinely cared for,* their self-esteem is high. With love and support, anyone can feel valued and special. (3)

Self-esteem is a personal assessment of worthiness. People with high self-esteem are not overly retiring or aggressive. They are more likely to be creative, because being creative involves taking risks. They are proud of their accomplishments, able to assume responsibility, tolerant of frustrations, enthusiastic about new challenges and able to show a broad range of emotions. (1)

Meeting ideas

Consult "Plan your parenting meetings carefully" and "Choose meeting activities" in the leader's guide for background information. Also consult other meeting cards since they are all related to self-esteem.

Energizers

Start your meeting with an energizer to get your audience interested.

Family quiz (20 minutes)

Goal: **To make the participants aware of the ways their family builds self-esteem and to suggest new ways to build it.**

Tools: **Type and make copies of the following quiz* and the reproducible *Helping children like themselves.* Supply pens or pencils.**

Rating scale

Almost never	Sometimes	Half the time	Usually	Almost always
1	2	3	4	5

In our family:

___ 1. We listen to each other's thoughts and ideas.
___ 2. We respect each other's different ideas.
___ 3. We try to be considerate of each other's feelings.
___ 4. We try to understand what each person is feeling.
___ 5. When decisions need to be made, we can freely express our opinions.
___ 6. We support each other's efforts to learn new things.
___ 7. We support each other's efforts to accomplish what is important to each of us.
___ 8. We recognize each other's strengths, accomplishments and contributions to the family.
___ 9. We express appreciation to each other for the good things that happen.
___10. We send messages to each other that make us all feel good.
_____Total

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Method: **Pass out the quiz. Instruct the participants to choose the number from the rating scale that applies to their family for each statement. After they have taken the quiz, tell them to add up the total for the 10 statements and to put the total on the bottom line. Tell them: "Each statement describes a way to build self-esteem in your family. Check your score. If it's between 35 and 50, your're doing fine. Keep it up! If it's between 20 and 35, you need to work on some specific areas of building self-esteem. If it's between five and 20, you have some serious blocks to building self-esteem and need to consider using the statement ideas to build self-esteem in your family." Discuss each statement. Pass out *Helping children like themselves.* Brainstorm ways that each action could be implemented in the family. *Go on to the core meeting activity.***

Brainstorm (20 minutes)

Goal: **To help parents identify words or phrases that are helpful or harmful in building self-esteem.**

Tools: **Flipchart and marker or chalkboard and chalk, copies of the reproducible *Helping children like themselves.***

Method: **Hand out the reproducible *Helping children like themselves* to the audience. Explain the concept of self-esteem as you learned it from "The facts" on this card or material from**

(Continued on page 2)

the resources. Have the audience brainstorm words or phrases that would be helpful for self-esteem and words or phrases that would be detrimental. Some phrases they might suggest that *build* self-esteem are:

- ☐ **Thanks for helping me.**
- ☐ **I feel frustrated/sad/angry to see you do that.**
- ☐ **I would prefer for you to . . . because . . .**

Some phrases they might suggest that *hurt* self-esteem are:

- ☐ **Why do you always do that?**
- ☐ **Why are you so stupid/slow?**
- ☐ **How many times have I told you . . .?**

Write down all suggestions. When the parents have thought of all that they can, discuss each suggestion. Say *why* the phrase is positive or negative. *Go on to the core meeting activity.*

Core meeting activities

Film (1 hour)

Goals: To show parents how the actions of parents affect the self-esteem of their children.

Tools: Order the film *Mirrors: A Film About Self-Esteem*, with accompanying brochures and planning guide. Mirrors is a film that stresses the important role parents play in developing their children's self-esteem. Parents act as a mirror in which children see their own strengths, weaknesses and potential. Sometimes things even the best parents say can distort the image children have of themselves. But if parents believe in their kids and show it, kids will find it easier to believe in themselves; they'll like what they see in the mirror.

Method: Preview the film so that you know the film is appropriate for your audience. Prepare a list of possible discussion questions. Tell your audience that you will show a film. Briefly describe the film and say that you will discuss it afterward. Show the film and ask the audience to comment. Encourage discussion with questions referring to events, ideas and values expressed in the film, such as "What were your feelings about . . .?" "What's your reaction to . . .?" Thank them for their participation.

Panel (45 minutes)

Goal: To show parents how important self-esteem is in all parts of their children's lives.

Tools: Copy the reproducible *Helping children like themselves* and/or the handout *Leading Children to Self-Esteem.*

Method: Invite several experts on self-esteem—an adolescent psychologist, a drug counselor and/or a teacher. Give all of them *Helping children like themselves*, and ask them to prepare a 10-15 minute talk. ● The psychologist could talk about self-esteem for adolescents in general. ● The drug counselor could talk about the likelihood of low self-esteem increasing drug abuse. ● The teacher could talk about how self-esteem lowers grades and attention span. At the meeting, introduce the speakers. Explain that they will speak on self-esteem. Allow each speaker the allotted time. Move on to the next speaker. When all the speakers are through, ask for questions. Pass out *Helping children like themselves.* Suggest, with the help of the panel, ways that parents can improve their children's self-esteem. Ask for further suggestions from the audience. Thank the speakers for their help.

Role playing (1 hour)

Goal: To give parents practice in helping their children to like themselves.

Tools: Develop two handouts. Copy the reproducible *Helping children like themselves* for one. Choose and type four of the following scenarios for the other:

- Your child picks only drab clothes to wear.
- Your child is the class bully.
- Your daughter, who used to do well in school, no longer studies.
- Your child is gaining weight.
- Your daughter constantly diets.
- Your son has been arrested for possessing marijuana.
- Your child has been arrested for driving drunk.

Method: Distribute the handout *Helping children like themselves* to all meeting participants. Review the contents with the group and briefly discuss each tip. Ask the parents for comments and any tips they would like to add. Next, divide the audience into groups of five. Distribute the second handout. Tell the participants that the purpose of this activity is to practice ways to reduce stress in teens. Ask the groups to discuss and act out the first scenario on their sheet. Allow five to 10 minutes for role playing. Ask the groups to report on their solutions. Allow for discussion of ideas. Follow the same procedure for the next three scenarios. After the group discussion of these scenarios, ask the participants the following questions: "What did you learn?" "Do you have anything more to add to the handout?" Summarize the discussion and thank the participants for their efforts.

References

1—*Our Children's Self-Esteem, Family Life Educator Selected Articles*, vol. 1-3, Network Publications, 1985.

2—"Teaching about Body Image: A Technique for Improving Body Satisfaction," by Leslie McBride, *Journal of School Health*, February 1986.

3—*Life Planning Education*, The Center for Population Options, March 1985.

4—*New York Times*, August 23, 1988.

Resources

For the leader:

● *Our Children's Self-Esteem: Thoughts for Parents and Teachers*, from Network Publications, is a pamphlet that describes self-esteem and tips for helping children achieve it. Network Publications, P.O. Box 1830, Santa Cruz, CA 95061-1830. One to four copies free. 50 copies for $14.

● National PTA and Keebler Company have developed an award-winning film for PTA meetings, *Mirrors: A Film About Self-Esteem*, available on a free-loan basis. Modern Talking Pictures, 5000 Park St., St. Petersburg, FL 33709-9989; (800) 237-4599. Specify VHS or 16mm. Comes with a guide to plan meetings and 40 copies of a brochure for parents. Available for purchase in VHS for $19.95 for PTA's, $25 for others.

For the parent:

● *Raising a Child Conservatively in a Sexually Permissive World* by Sol and Judith Gordon is a good reference book that explains for parents some of the pressures that a preteen/teen faces and describes strategies for helping children to improve their self-esteem during this time. Simon and Schuster, 1230 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10020. Cost: $13.95.

For the preteen and teen:

● *Up to You Student Manual* by Dan Celentano covers a variety of topics—drugs, smoking, stealing—that are all affected by a person's self-esteem. Interesting, easy to read. Up to You, Inc., 2233 Whittier St., Duluth, MN 55803. Cost: $12.25.

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PARENTING

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TEEN STRESS: WHAT YOU CAN DO

Objectives

- To show parents the causes of stress in adolescents
- To give parents suggestions for helping their adolescents reduce stress

The facts

- Five thousand or more adolescents commit suicide each year. Another 500,000 attempt it. This means that *every 90 minutes* a U.S. teen commits suicide. (1) (2)
- It's been estimated that 80-90 percent of all illnesses, including headaches, ulcers, infections and high blood pressure, are stress-related. Fifty percent of all doctor visits are considered stress-related. Stress in teens is often the cause for stomachaches, headaches, anorexia and bulimia. (1) (3)

All humans experience stress. It is a necessary part of life. The **response** to stress is what often needs to be controlled. A person's feelings, attitudes and outlook on life affect his or her ability to deal with stress. The amount of stress that a person experiences depends on his or her expectations and experiences, the presence or absence of a network of caring people and the sense of control that he or she has over circumstances. (4)

Parents often don't recognize the symptoms of stress in their adolescents. Identifying the symptoms and learning coping mechanisms is an important step in helping their teens to respond well to stress and to reduce excessive amounts of stress.

Meeting ideas

Consult "Plan your parenting meetings carefully" and "Choose meeting activities" in the leader's guide for background information. Also consult the meeting cards on self-esteem, decision making and fitness, since they are related to stress.

Energizers

Try one of these energizers with your audience to get them interested!

Stress busters (15 minutes)

Goal: **To demonstrate easy methods to reduce stress.**

Tools: **Clear an open space so that the group will be able to move freely. Bring a tape player with soothing music.**

Method: **Before going to the meeting, practice these exercises so that you know what you're doing. Try them out with your family! At the meeting give a brief explanation of stress, taken from "The facts" and "Tips." Tell the participants that you are going to demonstrate some stress-reduction exercises. Explain that these are a good first step to reducing stress in their lives. And the exercises feel good too!**

Have the participants follow your lead in the following exercises:

- ***Head rolls:*** **Bring your chin to your chest, rotate your head to the left, bend it back, rotate it to the right and to the front. Do this five times.**
- ***Shoulder rolls:*** **Circle one shoulder forward, up, back and down. Reverse directions. Repeat with the other shoulder. Do five sets.**
- ***Temple relaxer:*** **Place fingertips on temples. Rub your temples with small circles up and toward the ears.**
- ***Deep breathing:*** **Inhale deeply through the nose for eight seconds, then slowly exhale through the mouth for eight seconds. Do this five times.**

Brainstorming (20 minutes)

Goal: **To teach the parents to identify symptoms and causes of stress in their teens.**

Tools: **Prepare a handout of "The facts" and "Tips." Provide large sheets of paper, markers and tape for each group of five people.**

Method: **Divide the participants into groups of five. Tell them to write down some of the *symptoms* of stress in teens. Allow them five minutes. Offer a few symptoms from the list in the "Tips" if they have trouble getting started. At the end of the allotted time, have them post their paper on the walls. Have each group tell why they included certain things as symptoms. At the end of the discussion, mention any symptoms that have been left out.**

Ask them to return to their groups and brainstorm the *causes* of stress in their preteens and teens. At the end of five minutes, the lists should look something like this:

- **Responsibility of caring for the children**
- **Being their parent's only confidant**
- **Failing grades**
- **Arguments between parents**
- **Serious family illness**
- **Breaking up with their boyfriend or girlfriend**
- **A death in the family**
- **Worry about failure**
- **Heavy work load**
- **Worry about looking like a fool, being unattractive or unpopular**
- **Frustration when their parents don't understand their point of view (2) (6) (7)**

Follow the same procedure as with the symptoms. Pass out the handout of "The facts" and "Tips." Discuss the handout. *Move on to the core meeting activity.*

Core meeting activities

Role playing (45 minutes)

Goal: To give parents practice in leading their teens out of stressful situations.

Tools: Develop two handouts. Use the "Tips" and "The facts" for one. Type three of the following scenarios for the other:

- Your son's friends have girlfriends, but your son doesn't yet.
- Your daughter's sexual development is behind that of her friends.

- A classmate of your child has committed suicide.
- A family move puts your son in with a group of peers very different from his old friends, causing him to stand out.
- Your child is involved in too many activities.
- Your child has acne.

Method: Distribute the handout with the "Tips" and "The facts" to all meeting participants. Review the contents with the group, briefly discuss each fact and tip and ask for comments. Next divide the audience into groups of five. Distribute the second handout. Tell the participants that the purpose of this activity is to practice ways to reduce stress in preteens and teens. Ask the groups to discuss and act out the first scenario on their sheet. Allow five to 10 minutes for discussion and role playing. Ask the groups to report on their solutions. Encourage discussion. Follow the same procedure for the second and third scenarios. After the group discussion of the final scenario, ask the participants the following questions: "What did you learn?" "Do you have anything to add to the 'Tips' handout?" Summarize the discussion.

Film (20 minutes)

Goal: To show parents the problems that stress can cause in adolescents and ways to reduce this stress.

Tools: Order the film *Managing Stress, Anxiety and Frustration,* which is divided into four parts, each 20 minutes long. The first two give general information about stress. The third and fourth give tips on dealing with the stress. Check the "Resources/For the leader" section of this card or your local library or school for other films on teen stress.

Method: Preview the film and decide which sections would be best for your audience. Read the accompanying booklet, *Managing Stress, Anxiety and Frustration,* to prepare questions for discussion. Tell your audience that they are going to see a film about stress in adolescents and that a discussion will follow the film. Show the film, then ask a few questions encouraging discussion such as "What are major causes of stress for preteens and teens?" "What can you do to help your preteens and teens feel less stressed and more able to deal with their stresses?"

Tips for parents

- Don't be afraid to *be* a parent.
- Provide limits that will cut down on some of the stresses of unlimited choices. For example, tell them the time they need to be home for dinner. Where applicable, have your children decide from a list of choices you give them on the consequences for their actions if they act contrary to the rules. For example, if they are late for dinner give them several choices—warming up the dinner, making a sandwich or doing without.
- Help your children limit or expand the number of their activities and responsibilities based on their capabilities. Preteens and teens should have challenges but avoid becoming overwhelmed.
- Set a good example. Practice ways to reduce stress and your teen will be able to follow your lead. Some ways to reduce your reaction to stress are aerobic exercise, proper nutrition, yoga, meditation, deep breathing, relaxation exercises, sleep, massage, whirlpool, sauna and FUN.

Tips for the parent, preteen and teen:

- Avoid unnecessary worry. Thinking about a problem in order to arrive at a solution can be positive, but constant and unconstructive worry doesn't accomplish anything. It usually just makes situations more stressful.
- Become better organized. Plan activities a step at a time so that parts are accomplished. This gives you more self-esteem and more reasonable deadlines.
- Recognize the symptoms of stress. Some symptoms are:
  - ☐ Moodiness
  - ☐ Insomnia or other sleeping disorders
  - ☐ Lowered body resistance to colds, flu or other diseases
  - ☐ Preoccupation with negative or angry thoughts or feelings
  - ☐ Unusual behavior patterns
  - ☐ Experimentation with alcohol and illegal drugs
  - ☐ Loss of appetite or eating disorders such as anorexia or bulimia
- When you know you have a problem with stress, try to solve it one step at a time. Part of the problem could be trying to do too much at once. Take it in easy stages.
  - ☐ Practice relaxing your body.
  - ☐ Decide what is causing you unnecessary stress.
  - ☐ Analyze the causes of the stress and deal with them one step at a time.
  - ☐ Remove or reduce these stressful situations if you can.
  - ☐ Find ways for friends, family members or coworkers to help you by assuming some responsibilities that have been yours.

References

1—American Red Cross information release, January 24, 1990.

2—"Life After a Son's Suicide: One Family's Struggle," *New York Times,* January 13, 1986.

3—"Stress and the Middle Grader," David Elkind, *The Education Digest,* May 1986.

4—"Stress and Health: Exploring the Links," Steven F. Maier, *Psychology Today,* August 1985.

5—"Take a Break," *Family Circle,* January 21, 1986.

6—American Academy of Pediatrics news release, January 11, 1985.

7—"How Working Families Can Deal with Stress in Their Lives," *PTA Today,* December 1985/January 1986.

Resources

For the leader:

- *Managing Stress, Anxiety and Frustration,* by Sunburst Communications, is a set of four filmstrips, each 20 minutes long, that covers the roots of stress and ways to manage it. Contact: Sunburst Films, Room TJ 7, 39 Washington Ave., Pleasantville, NY 10570; (914) 769-5030 (NY), (800) 431-1934. Cost: $209 VHS. Available free for 30-day review.
- *Less Stress* explains what stress is, what causes it, how it affects the human body and possible ways to handle it. Audience Planners, 5107 Douglas Fir Road, Calabasas, CA 91302; (800) 624-8613, (818) 884-3100. Rental: $60 VHS or 16mm.

For the parent:

- *Helping Your Child Handle Stress,* a book for parents covering the normal and abnormal causes of stress in children and how to help them. KIDSRIGHTS, 3700 Progress Blvd., Mount Dora, FL 32757; (800) 892-KIDS. Cost: $8.95 paperback; order publication #0727.

For the preteen/teen:

- *Teenage Stress* by Susan and Daniel Cohen, M. Evans and Company is a guide for teens on sources of stress and how the teen can relieve them. M. Evans and Company, 216 E. 49th Street, New York, NY 10017. Cost: $10.95 plus $2 shipping and handling.

Parenting: The Underdeveloped Skill

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PARENTING

The Underdeveloped Skill

Objectives

- To inform parents about HIV (the human immunodeficiency virus) and AIDS
- To encourage parents to talk with their teens and children about HIV and AIDS

The facts

- According to the Centers for Disease Control, between 1 million and 1.5 million people in the United States may be infected with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. All of them, even those who do not have AIDS itself, can pass the virus on to others through sexual contact, by sharing IV drug needles or syringes or by giving birth or breast-feeding.
- HIV is not easily transmitted. There are no reported cases of AIDS caused by casual contact.
- Teens are in grave danger of becoming infected with the AIDS virus if they engage in unprotected sexual intercourse or experiment with IV drugs. As of January 1990, 2,055 cases of AIDS had been reported in children under 13 years old and 479 cases in teens age 13-19.

Meeting ideas

Consult "Plan your parenting meetings carefully" and "Choose meeting activities" in the leader's guide prior to addressing this sensitive and complex topic. Also refer to the meeting cards on drugs and sexuality, since HIV is transmitted through intravenous drug needles and sexual contact.

In planning a meeting on this sensitive and complex topic, **find a speaker who is knowledgeable about AIDS and experienced in explaining it,** preferably one with a background in the medical or health field. Work with the speaker to plan what kind of information will be presented and how it will be presented. Show the speaker this card and the reproducibles *AIDS: What parents should know* and *Teens and AIDS: Play it safe or don't play at all!* as well as any other resources you may have from National PTA or other groups. Discuss the possibility of using some of the ideas or information on this card as part of your meeting agenda. Plan your agenda together. The actual presentation should include factual information geared to a nonmedical audience. You may also wish to discuss how the speaker will address homosexuality and other important issues that may come up in a discussion about AIDS.

Energizers

Start off with an energizer and get your audience's interest right away!

Quiz (15-20 minutes)

***Goal:* To inform parents that children and teens do need to know about HIV and AIDS.**

***Tools:* Photocopy the reproducible quiz *AIDS: What parents should know* for each person present.**

***Method:* Hand out the quiz. Ask participants not to look at the answers. Ask them to write down their answers. After participants finish the quiz, discuss the answers. Invite participation by asking, "What was your answer to number 4? Why do you think that's so?" To support the answers, have a health educator or doctor knowledgeable about AIDS discuss the questions and answers.**

After all questions have been discussed, ask participants if they have any more questions that they want answered in this meeting. *Go on to the core meeting activity.*

Questions (10-15 minutes)

***Goal:* To encourage parents to talk with their teens and children about AIDS.**

***Tools:* Enough 3"x5" cards for each member of your audience and a box, hat or bowl in which to collect the cards. Optional: chalkboard and chalk or flipchart and marker.**

Method:* Ask the audience to write any questions they have about AIDS on their 3"x5" card. Collect the cards. Read out loud questions from several of the cards. Write the questions on your chalkboard or flipchart for emphasis, if you wish. Answer the questions referring to the *Surgeon General's Report on AIDS* and other reference materials. Point out that they had a lot of unanswered questions and that children and teens probably have many such questions as well. *Go on to the core meeting activity.

Core meeting activities

Film

Goal: To educate parents about AIDS.

Tools: Choose from the following films for your meeting, or use another film about AIDS. There are many films available on AIDS. *Beyond Fear* is an in-depth documentary that describes in detail what AIDS is, how people can reduce their risk of getting it and what action communities are taking in response to the problem. *Sex, Drugs and AIDS* and *The Subject Is: AIDS* are serious and interesting films about how HIV is and isn't transmitted; the second emphasizes abstinence.

Method: Before showing any film, take time to view it. Some may be more appropriate to the concerns and values of your community than others. You or your speaker will also want to know what the film is about in order to be prepared to lead a discussion following the film.

Tell your audience that you would like to show them a film. Briefly state what the film is about in no more than one or two sentences. Afterward, ask the audience to comment. Encourage discussion with questions referring to events, ideas and values expressed in the film, such as, "What were your feelings about . . . ?" "What's your reaction to . . . ?" "What did you learn from the film?" "Do you agree with . . . ?" "If so, why?"

Skit

Goal: To help parents discover ways to talk with their children about HIV and AIDS.

Tools: Talking skills/Listening skills reproducible included in the *Parenting: The Underdeveloped Skill* box, National PTA pamphlet *How to Talk to your Teens and Children about AIDS.*

Method: Prior to your meeting, plan some skits concerning parent/child communication about AIDS. Use the following examples or develop your own skits. Recruit PTA volunteers to play the parts. Consider using teens from a school drama club

or other teen group to play some parts. Consider presenting both good and poor solutions to the situation presented in each skit and asking the parents what was done well or poorly in each case.

Before presenting the skits, introduce the group to the *Talking skills/Listening skills* handout and the pamphlet *How to Talk to Your Teens and Children about AIDS*. Discuss ways to communicate effectively and how to discuss AIDS with children of different ages. Present the skits. Pause for questions and comments as you conclude each one.

- Nine-year-old Emily has just come home from school very upset. When her mother tries to find out what's wrong, Emily says that one of the other children told her that if you kiss someone with AIDS you could get it and die. How can Emily's mother reassure Emily?
- Paul is 15. He has had a few brief conversations with his father about sex but not about AIDS. Although Paul's parents don't expect him to engage in risky behavior, they know that teens may try foolish things. They want to make sure that they've done everything they can to safeguard Paul. How can Paul's parents open a conversation with him about AIDS?
- Debra is 12. Lately she's been asking what appear to be offhand questions about dying, sex and homosexuals. Debra's father was disturbed by some of her questions and avoided giving her straight answers. Debra has suddenly stopped asking questions, but her father now realizes that she may need information about sex and AIDS to help her understand these important issues. What can Debra's father do?
- Diego is 17 and preparing to go to college. He'll be living in another state in a college dorm. His parents realize that, like many teens living away from home for the first time, he'll probably do some things they wouldn't approve of. They know they can't control what Diego does, but they want him to make the most informed decisions he can. One thing they would like to talk to Diego about is AIDS and responsible sexual behavior. What could Diego's parents say to him?

Resources

For the leader:

- Fact sheet on AIDS (included) is available by contacting your local March of Dimes chapter. Speakers' bureau and educational materials on teenage pregnancy are also available.
- American Red Cross publishes a series of free brochures, films and posters on AIDS. Contact the American Red Cross, AIDS Education Office, 1730 D Street NW, Washington, DC 20006; 202-737-8300, or your local Red Cross chapter.
- *Beyond Fear* is an in-depth documentary that describes in detail what AIDS is, how an individual can reduce his or her chance of getting it and what action communities are taking in response to the problem. Modern Talking Pictures, 5000 Park St., St. Petersburg, FL 33709; 813-541-7571. Cost: free plus cost of return postage.
- *Everyone Can Avoid AIDS* is a color video using entertaining clay animation to deliver essential information about HIV transmission and prevention. Covers abstinence and condom use and delivers a strong antidrug message. Order from Network Publications, PO Box 1830, Santa Cruz, CA 95061; 1-800-321-4407.
- The Public Health Service AIDS Hotline gives referrals for local AIDS testing sites and sends a variety of booklets from the PHS, Red Cross and the Surgeon General in bulk. Call 1-800-342-AIDS (1-800-344-SIDA for a Spanish-speaking operator). To order brochures on AIDS, contact the National AIDS Information Clearinghouse, PO Box 60003, Rockville, MD 20850; 1-800-342-7514.

For the school:

- *Teaching AIDS*, by Marcia Quackenbush and Pamela Sargent, is a resource guide designed to assist teachers, youth leaders and health educators in presenting the facts on AIDS in a practical and relevant manner. It includes lesson plans, teaching materials and background materials on AIDS. Network Publications, PO Box 1830, 1700 Mission St., Santa Cruz, CA 95061-1830; 408-429-9822. Cost: $17.20.
- *AIDS: What Young Adults Should Know* was written by William L. Yarber to help teachers present the subject of AIDS in the high school classroom. Includes student and instructor's guides. American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, 1900 Association Drive, Reston, VA 22091; 703-476- 3481. Student guide: $2.50 each plus shipping and handling; bulk rates available. Teacher's guide: $8.95 plus shipping and handling.
- *AIDS and the Public Schools is a comprehensive book* with guidelines for administrators. National School Boards Association, 1680 Duke St., Alexandria, VA 22314; 703-838-6722. Cost: $15.
- *Someone at School Has AIDS* is a guide to developing policies on students and school staff infected with HIV. Contact the National Association of State Boards of Education, 1012 Cameron St., Alexandria, VA 22314; 703-684-4000.

For the parent:

- *How to Talk to Your Teens and Children about AIDS* (English and Spanish), *How to Talk to Your Child about Sex* and *How to Talk to Your Preteen and Teen about Sex* are pamphlets for parents that discuss ways to successfully convey information and values to your children. National PTA, 700 N. Rush St., Chicago, IL 60611-2571. Cost: $15 per 100 for the AIDS pamphlets, $12 per 100 for the sex brochures.
- The *AIDS Prevention Guide* for parents and other adults concerned about youth is available in English and Spanish from the National AIDS Information Clearinghouse (1-800-458-5231). It contains useful information about preventing the spread of AIDS as well as handouts for young people.
- *Answers and AIDS* is a general overview of the disease and its symptoms. Written for the layperson, the booklet lists ways in which individuals can protect themselves from AIDS. American Council of Science and Health, 47 Maple St., Summit, NJ 07901. Free with a self-addressed envelope stamped with 64 cents postage.

For the preteen and teen:

- *Children and the AIDS Virus*, by Rosmarie Hausherr, explains in simple terms the body's immune system, how it is attacked by the AIDS virus and what can be done to prevent the disease. For parents, teachers and children. Published by Houghton Mifflin/Clarion Books, 52 Vanderbilt Ave., New York, NY 10017.
- *AIDS: Trading Fears for Facts*, by Dr. Karen Hein and Theresa Foy DiGeronimo, is a guide for young people. Cost: $3.95. Order from Consumer Reports Books, 51 E. 42nd St., New York, NY 10017.
- *Sex, Drugs and AIDS* and *The Subject Is: AIDS* are serious but interesting films about how the AIDS virus is and isn't passed. The second emphasizes abstinence. ODN Productions, 74 Varick St., Suite 304, New York, NY 10013; 212-431-8923. Cost: $325 + $10 shipping to purchase either video (if purchasing both videos, second one will cost $135 + $10 shipping). Rental: $85/week for either video.
- *Teens and AIDS: Playing It Safe* is a colorful brochure for teens. American Council of Life Insurance, 1001 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20006; 202-624-2370. Cost: $10 per 100.

This card was produced in March 1988 with technical assistance from the Centers for Disease Control and updated in March 1990. The National PTA AIDS education project is made possible with the assistance of a grant from the Centers for Disease Control, Division of Adolescent and School Health, which covers 100% of the project cost.

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PINK TAB

PARENTING

The Underdeveloped Skill

Objectives

- To get parents to explore their own attitudes about prejudice so they can be better role models
- To understand where teen prejudice comes from
- To give parents suggestions to help their teens live without prejudice, accept differences and appreciate the uniqueness of others

The facts

- A high school student in Georgia commented, "Prejudice in our school is an epidemic because every time we have an assembly program, blacks sit on one side and whites sit on the other side of the auditorium. . . . Another incident is that our proms are not mixed; rather, they are separate." (1)

- A recent issue of *Time* magazine noted a rise in racist and anti-Asian press coverage of Japanese investment in the United States ("They're taking over!"), even though Japanese investment is only half that of Great Britain and roughly equal to that of the Netherlands. (2)

- According to research, children first learn prejudice from their parents around age 5. By age 7, children begin to mimic their parents' racial attitudes and behaviors, and by age 9, most of their racial attitudes and behavior are fully developed. (3)

- In a recent poll by *USA Today*, 60 percent of 601 blacks surveyed said they experience racism daily, and experts say even the subtlest racism isn't lost on children. (4)

- Campuses were in the forefront of the civil rights movement in the 60s, yet in the past two years racial incidents have been on the rise on campuses across the country. (5)

Many people would like to think that prejudice and discrimination are a thing of the past. Sadly, this is not true. As these facts show, in many ways these evils are on the rise. Teens and preteens, eager to fit in with their peers, are susceptible to prejudice. This is true in spite of the efforts of the most fair-minded parents. How does this happen?

Kids learn prejudice by living in and observing a society where prejudices exist. Opinions are influenced by what the people around them think, say and, most especially, do.

Teens wonder why some people never associate with others from certain social or religious groups. These same groups may be the target of vicious jokes. If no one points out the unfairness of these activities, teens may very well think that this is right or will make them popular or, worse still, that these groups somehow deserve this treatment because they really are inferior.

Furthermore, teens who have a poor self-image are more vulnerable to prejudice. Studies show that children become more prejudiced as they move from lower to upper grades. Promoting self-esteem and a positive self-image will give us a future society that's less prejudiced and more tolerant in all areas.

Meeting ideas

Consult "Plan your parenting meetings carefully" and "Choose meeting activities" in the leader's guide. In planning a meeting on this sensitive and complex topic, **find a knowledgeable and experienced speaker,** preferably one with a background in race relations, social work or psychology. Work with the speaker to plan what kind of information will be presented and how it will be presented. Show the speaker this card and the reproducible *Helping children to accept people's differences* as well as any other resources you may have from National PTA or other groups. To contact potential speakers, check your school's human resource facilities, the local chapter of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, your city/county human relations commission or your local YMCA.

Energizers

Start your meeting with an energizer to get your audience's interest.

I decide who's better (15 minutes)

Goal: **To focus attention right away on the unfairness of prejudice.**

Tools: **The audience and chairs.**

Method: **Arrange seating so that those with brown eyes are separate from those with blue eyes. (Or choose straight or curly hair, or long or short hair, or any other noticeable physical characteristic.) Don't let the participants know how or why you are separating them. Talk to one group as if they were really special and worthy of special treatment. Praise them and ignore the others. Ask everyone how they feel about this arrangement. Tell the participants what's going on and how they were chosen. Are blue-eyed people better than brown-eyed? Discuss the fairness of using eye color as a basis of judgment. *Go on to your core meeting activity.***

What are you saying? (15 minutes)

Goal: **To distinguish personal opinions from harmful prejudice.**

Tools: **An easel or blackboard, markers or chalk.**

Method: **Divide the parents into groups of three or four. Write these statements on the blackboard or easel.:**

"There is only one right way to do things."
"Look out for yourself; no one else will."
"Only people like me have a right to be happy."
"Girls should learn only things that are useful around the house."
"There will always be war; that's human nature."

For 10 minutes have the groups discuss which of these statements has anything to do with prejudice. Have one person from each group report the conclusions. For example, there may have been a sharp disagreement that got the group thinking. Summarize the conclusions and ask for additional comments. *Go on to your core meeting activity.*

Core meeting activities

Film (1 hour)

Goal: To get parents talking about the causes and results of prejudice and discrimination.

Tools: Order the film *Eye of the Storm* as a discussion starter. In this network news special, the effects of prejudice are made clear as the cameras record a two-day experiment conducted by a third-grade teacher in a rural community. On the first day, the teacher separated her class into "superior" and "inferior" groups based on eye color. On the second day the roles were reversed. Attitudes, behavior and performance were changed as a result of the children's discrimination and the effects of prejudice toward each other.

Methods: Introduce the film and let the audience know that they will discuss it afterward. Show the film. Then ask the parents to form several smaller groups.

Ask the groups to discuss the film. Ask questions such as "What does the film say about the sources of prejudice?" "What effects did the prejudicial activities have on the students?" After the discussion bring all the groups back together and ask them to report on their discussions. What did they learn about the causes and effects of prejudice and discrimination?

Encourage more discussion based on what comes out of the small group discussions. Wind up the meeting with a summary and urge everyone to put what they've learned into action.

Brainstorm (1-hour)

Goal: To get participants to begin to appreciate and respect cultural and ethnic differences.

Tools: An easel or blackboard, markers or chalk, paper and pens, the reproducible *Helping children accept people's differences.*

Methods: Give paper and pens to everyone. Ask parents to write down a definition for each of the following terms: ethnic group, race, class, culture.

Tell parents they don't need to have exact definitions. (As an alternative, break the audience into several smaller groups and have each group work on one of the definitions.)

Divide the blackboard or easel into three columns. List the definitions in the first column without commenting on them. Then, ask the group to brainstorm as many ethnic groups as they can think of. This will probably include national groups (Hispanics, for example), religious groups (Jewish) and racial groups (Blacks, Asians). List these in the second column.

In the third column ask the parents to list specific things that make the groups different from each other. For example, what makes the Irish different from Hispanics? (Possible responses: national homeland, language, heritage, culture).

Ask which of these things would apply to all the groups listed. (The conclusion should be that no single thing applies across the board.)

Ask for a reevaluation of the terms defined. For example, a good but very general definition of "ethnic group" might include: a common heritage among group members, how the group and the members identify themselves or how others identify members of this group.

Have the discussion focus on the differences and similarities among nationalities, religions and races. Summarize what was learned about this and ask for further comments or questions. Ask for a list of ways to help children be more understanding and accepting of all ethnic, racial and religious groups.

References

1—*Teenagers Themselves*, compiled by the Glenbard East *Echo*, New Yorks: Adama Books, 1984.

2—*Time*, November 1989, p. 79.

3—*Los Angeles Times*, February 13, 1989.

4—"Parents Have the Power to Raise Colorblind Children," *USA Today*, September 18, 1989.

5—"Psychologists Find Ways to Break Racism's Hold," *New York Times*, September 5, 1989.

Resources

For the leader:

- *Eye of the Storm.* 25 minutes. Includes a discussion guide. Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, Dept. JW, 823 United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017; (212) 490-2525. Rental: $60 for VHS or 16mm.

- *Prejudice Project.* Excellent leadership strategies include lecture material, opinionaires, role playing and use of literature and film. Anti-Defamation League, address above. Cost: $5.

- *Educating for Peace and Justice* by James and Kathleen McGinnis et al., Institute for Peace and Justice, 1985. Volume one contains units on multicultural education and racism. Institute for Peace and Justice, 4144 Lindell Blvd., Room 122, St. Louis, MO 63108; (314) 533-4445. Cost: $11.95.

- *Helping Families Care* by James McGinnis, 1989. This excellent resource for teaching family communications contains a chapter on "Celebrating Diversity and Human Possibilities." Included are games, exercises, activities and stories that promote tolerance and appreciation. Institute for Peace and Justice, address above. Cost: $11.95.

- *Childcare Shapes the Future: Anti-Racist Strategies.* This filmstrip/tape resource explains clearly how racism affects very young children and offers strategies for change. Council on Interracial Books for Children, 1841 Broadway, New York, NY 10023; (212) 757-5339. Cost: $45.

- *What to Tell Your Child About Prejudice and Discrimination*, by the National PTA and the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, 1989. NPTA Kits, PO Box 1015, Tinley Park, IL 60477. Single copy free; $8 per 100.

For teens and preteens:

- *Prejudiced—How Do People Get That Way?* A simple and powerful explanation of why people become prejudiced and how to prevent it. Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, Dept. JW, 823 United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017. Cost: $1.50.

- *Helping Kids Care* by Camy Condon and James McGinnis. Chants, skits, puppets and poems all combine to spark giggles, blast stereotypes and close the gap between "us and them." For kids ages 8-12. *ForParents*, 8481 N. Main St., Eden, NY 14057. Cost: $9.95 plus shipping.

- *The Secret of Goodasme.* For middle-grade youth and up, this filmstrip presents the realities of racial stereotypes through interactions among three youth (a white female and black and Cherokee males) and two visitors from the planet Goodasme. Cost: $29.95. Other filmstrips available from the same distributor include *Unlearning Chicano and Puerto Rican Stereotypes* and *Unlearning Asian American Stereotypes*, both $39.95. Council on Interracial Books for Children, 1841 Broadway, New York, NY 10023; (212) 757-5339.

- *Black History: Lost, Stolen or Strayed.* An entertaining and insightful 16mm film on stereotypes of Black Americans. Narrated by Bill Cosby, this 60-minute film is available in many public library film centers and can be shown in 30-minute segments.

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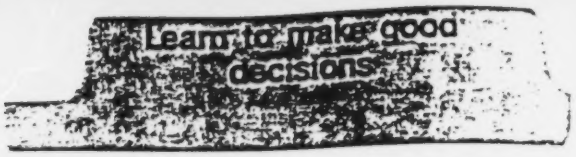

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PARENTING

The Underdeveloped Skill

Objectives

- To help parents explore the steps to making a decision
- To give parents suggestions for helping their teens make use of decision-making skills

The facts

- Forty-four percent of tenth-graders and 32 percent of eighth-graders report they have ridden in a car when the driver has used drugs or alcohol. (1)
- Each year 1.1 million teenage girls become pregnant. (2)

Clearly, teens and preteens are making important decisions every day. Some are as simple as what to eat; others are as complex as whether to go to college or become sexually active. Many of these decisions are made with limited knowledge or without careful thought. Often decisions are made for the wrong reasons: in order to be liked or to "prove" something or as an act of rebellion. Sometimes teens may not even be aware of how or why they make decisions.

Parents can help their teens learn decision-making skills and put those skills into practice. To do so parents need to explore decision-making processes, their own family values and their children's goals and interests. Parents also need to learn ways to help their children develop decision-making skills.

There are several steps to successful decision making:

1) Recognizing that a decision needs to be made.
2) Gathering information to help make the decision.
3) Identifying alternative decisions.
4) Examining the potential outcomes of the alternatives.
5) Considering how the alternatives fit in with personal values and goals.
6) Recognizing poor reasons to choose certain alternatives such as peer pressure, a desire to prove maturity or feelings of rebellion.
7) Making a decision.

For more information on helping parents help their children, see "Tips for parents" on back.

Meeting ideas

Consult "Plan your parenting meetings carefully" and "Choose meeting activities" in the leader's guide for background information.

Energizers

Use the following energizer to get parents interested in your meeting topic right away.

Steps to decision making (15 minutes)

Goal: **To help parents identify the steps necessary for decision making.**

Tools: **A blackboard and chalk or an easel and markers. Paper and pencils for participants.**

Method: **Tell the participants that the group is going to brainstorm steps of how people sometimes make decisions. Make a "positive" column and a "negative" column on your blackboard or easel. Your columns should begin to look like this after a few minutes of brainstorming:**

Positive	Negative
• Gets needed information	• Let others decide for you
• Thinks about options	• Doesn't think about future impact of decision
• Considers personal values	• Rebels against authority
• Tries to imagine outcome of decision	• Desires to prove maturity

Write down all the thoughts of the group. If the brainstorming lags, help it along by volunteering a thought of your own or, better still, asking a question that will spark the group's thoughts. Once fairly thorough lists have been developed, review each list and ask the group to comment on them. Is there anything they would strike from or add to either list? Would they like to reword any of the list items? Do they have any observations about the two lists?

Move on to the second phase of the brainstorming. Ask the group to identify what they feel are the steps to good decision making. Make a new list for the steps. Many of those steps are probably in the positive list, so keep it (and the negative list) visible for the group to refer to. Ask the group to write down the steps since they may want to refer to them later. Once the group has come up with what it feels is a thorough list of the steps to good decision making, check to make sure it has all the steps given earlier on this card. It may have more steps depending on how detailed the group has been. If the list is missing an important step, try to get the group to suggest it, or, if that doesn't work, suggest the step yourself. *Go on to your core meeting activity.*

Core meeting activities

Parent/teen swap (35 minutes)

Goal: For parents and preteens or teens to explore decision-making processes and improve their communication skills.

Tools: Prepare a form for the brainstorming groups to use. List the following items on the form: questions to be decided; information needed; alternative 1, possible outcomes; alternative 2, possible outcomes; alternative 3, possible outcomes; which alternatives match my goals and values; which alternatives don't match my goals and values; what is my decision.

Make copies of the form and bring pencils. Also make copies of the steps to decision making given earlier on this card.

Method: Ask parents, preteens and teens to attend the meeting. Explain the goal of the meeting. Distribute the steps to decision-making handout. Review the steps to decision making if they have not already been discussed in your energizer. Explain how the meeting will work.

Each parent or set of parents and their children will form a group with one other parent or set of parents and their

children. Hand each group a decision-making situation. Here are possible decision-making situations. Choose one or create your own.

- Dan, 16, wants to buy a stereo.

- Susan, 15, hates school and gets poor grades. She is trying to decide whether or not to drop out of school.

- George, 10, has a best friend who is using drugs. He has to decide how to help his friend stop using drugs.

Ask the groups to imagine the types of things that should be considered in their decision-making situation. For instance, if the situation is "Dan wants to buy a stereo," such things as cost, a new or used model, how to raise money for the purchase and why Dan wants a stereo are all possible considerations. The aim of this exercise is to *use* the decision-making model and discuss *how* Dan should go about making his decision. (15 minutes)

Move on to the second phase. Ask each group to divide in two, *swapping children.* Distribute a copy of the decision-making form to each group. Now the parents and their "new" children will form a group to discuss a decision of their own choosing. (10 minutes)

Ask all the groups to stop their discussion. Bring all groups back together. Ask the participants what they learned in their discussion. Ask whether there are any comments, questions or problems. Sum up the meeting's key points. Congratulate everyone on their effort. (10 minutes)

Role playing (45 minutes)

Goal: To help parents practice communication with their children about decision making.

Tools: Copy the *Talking skills/Listening skills* handout and distribute it to participants. Make up a handout sheet describing three role-playing situations from the four choices listed below. Set up the room so that participants can break into groups of three.

Tips for parents

- **Give your children opportunities to practice making decisions.** For example, choosing the site of a family outing or dividing the chores fairly.
- **Show your children how to weigh their options,** gather necessary information and consider alternatives and potential outcomes of their decisions. You can show this to your children even in simple decision-making situations such as deciding what clothing to wear.
- **Help children understand that decisions have consequences both for themselves and others.** For instance, a teen might decide to take up smoking because it looks "mature" without considering that smoking carries with it a variety of consequences including yellow teeth, smoker's breath, an expensive habit and increased risk of cancer and heart disease.
- **Show your child that not making a decision when one is needed can be as bad as making the "wrong" decision.**
- **If you are not sure what kinds of decisions your children are mature enough to handle, give them the chance to try making some decisions.** Be supportive, friendly and ready at hand to save the day, if necessary. This will help both you and your children know what they are ready to do for themselves.
- **Accept your children's decisions.** Remember, no decision is perfect. Support your children's ability to make decisions.
- **Understand that many of your children's decisions will be based on their personal tastes** and needs and therefore may not match the decision you would have made for them.
- **Lay ground rules or limits for decision making.** If a child wants to do something that is clearly harmful or unacceptable, explain why you cannot allow him or her to act on that decision.
- **Remember, the ability to make decisions helps improve self-esteem.** Children who can exercise some control over their lives are being prepared to be responsible and happier adults.

Method: Discuss the *Talking skills/Listening skills* handout. Point out the ways it suggests to improve communication. Tell the group that they will be practicing these methods by role playing. Select three role-playing situations from among the following list or develop your own role-playing situations.

- Mark, 14, must choose between a vocational or college-bound curriculum in school. How can Mark's dad, George, help his son decide which curriculum is best for him?

- Ellen, 12, has asked her father, Roger, a few offhand questions about drugs. Roger doesn't think that Ellen has become involved in drugs, but he does want to make sure that she doesn't become involved in the future. How can Roger talk with his daughter about drugs in a way that will help her decide not to try them?

- Alisha, 17, has a chance to stay with her aunt in New York for the summer. She wants to go; however, she'll be leaving her boyfriend Tom. Alisha will miss Tom, and Tom doesn't want Alisha to go. How can Alisha's mother help her make the best decision?

- Luke, 16, wants to choose an after-school activity. He could join the school orchestra, where he would play his saxophone, or he could begin judo lessons at the local YMCA. How can Luke's dad help him make a decision?

References

1—"National Adolescent Student Health Survey" (NASHS), 1988, American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, Reston, VA.

2—*Talk, Listen, Care Kit,* Harvard Community Health Plan Foundation, 1989

Resources

For the leader or parent:

- *Teach Your Child Decision Making* by John F. Clabby, PhD, and Maurice J. Elias, PhD. A step-by-step guide with lots of examples. Doubleday & Company, Inc., 245 Park Ave., New York, NY 10167. Cost: $8.95 paperback only.

- *Getting Close* by Ellen Rosenberg covers many topics of great concern to preteens, teens and parents and gives examples of how to help children cope with these concerns. The Berkley Publishing Group, 200 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016. Cost: $7.95.

- *Responsive Parenting: Building Independence and Cooperation in Children* by Saf Lerman. This pamphlet is number nine in a series designed to help parents. American Guidance Service, Inc., Circle Pines, MN 55014-1796. Cost: $4.25.

For the preteen and teen:

- *Choices* and *Challenges* both by Mindy Bingham, Judy Edmondson and Sandy Stryker are excellent workbooks for girls and boys respectively. They cover topics such as career planning, marriage and children. Advocacy Press, PO Box 236, Santa Barbara, CA 93102. Cost: $14.95.

- *Self-Discovery* by Gilda Gussin and Ann Buxbaum is a workbook for teens covering goals and decision making among other topics. Network Publishing Co., PO Box 1830, Santa Cruz, CA 95061; (408) 438-4080. Cost: $12.95.

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PARENTING

The Underdeveloped Skill

Objectives

- To show parents how they can help their children make friends and develop strong friendships
- To show parents how they can help their children deal with peer pressure

The facts

- In a 1978 national study 8 percent of 2,200 children between 7 and 11 years old reported feeling lonely "a lot" and wished they had more friends. (1)
- When children in one elementary school were asked to name three other children they liked, about 10 percent of the children weren't chosen at all. (1)
- Adolescents often feel unable to cope with their peer groups. They may be unable to act like themselves for fear that they will be looked down upon or lose their friends. (2)

Many children don't know how to make friends because they lack basic social skills. Preteens and teens often fear rejection by their peers; therefore, they hesitate to start relationships. To build good friendships people need:

- Good self-esteem
- The ability to like and care for others
- Good social skills
- Good communication skills
- Good decision-making skills
- The ability to act responsibly

These skills and qualities are also important in resisting negative peer pressure. Parents can help their children develop these skills and qualities and enable their children to make new friends, improve their present friendships and resist negative peer pressure.

Meeting ideas

For background information consult "Plan your parenting meetings carefully" and "Choose meeting activities" in the leader's guide.

Energizers

Getting to know you (15 minutes)

Goal: **To help parents understand the concerns children may have in trying to make new friends.**

Tools: **An easel or blackboard, markers or chalk.**

Method: **Ask the meeting participants to pair off with a stranger in the audience. Give the pairs three minutes to get to know one another. Then go around the room and ask each member of the pair to introduce the other pair member and tell something interesting about that person. Then ask the participants how they felt about the task. Did they react with an "Oh, no! What do I say?" Did they wonder if they could tell the other person something that was really interesting about themselves? Did they hesitate to break the ice? Briefly discuss the participants' concerns in carrying out their introductions. Explain that meeting new people is just the beginning of developing friendships. Yet even adults often find meeting new people stressful.** ***Go on to your core meeting activity.***

What are the qualities of a friend? (20 minutes)

Goal: **To help parents and preteens or teens identify the qualities of friendship.**

Tools: **Two rolls of brown wrapping paper to hang on a wall. Mark one roll for parents and the other roll for preteens or teens. Markers for all audience participants.**

Method: **Invite parents and preteens or teens to your meeting. Tell your meeting participants that they are going to brainstorm the answer to this question: "What qualities do people look for in a friend?" Preteens or teens should come to the front of the room, take a marker and write down on the preteens' or teens' roll of paper the qualities they feel people look for in a friend. Parents should do likewise on the parents' roll of paper. Answers might include the following: loyalty, fun to be with, honesty, caring, making up for qualities I lack, liking the same things I do, accepting my faults, making me feel good about myself or is responsible, among others. Be sure to ask for some negative qualities that people might look for in a friend. After the group has brainstormed their lists, compare the lists made by parents and preteens and teens. Emphasize how parents', preteens' or teens' lists are similar.**

Then, ask all participants to identify the three qualities of a friend that they feel are most important. Ask the participants to share those qualities with other family members. Suggest the participants work to develop those qualities in their own friendships and help their children or parents do the same. ***Go on to core your meeting activity.***

Core meeting activities

Film (1 hour)

- *Goal:* To get parents and children talking about friendship—what it means and how to cope with its ups and downs.
- *Tools:* Order the two-part film *Friends: How They Help . . . How They Hurt* as a discussion starter for parents and children. The film discusses various kinds of friendships, why friends are so important to preteens and teens and the roles of trust, understanding and rejection. Dramatizations suggest some of the problems that may arise in friendships such as conflict, exploitation and different values. You may also be able to find other films on friendship through film rental houses, your public library, youth-serving organizations or schools.
- *Methods:* Invite both parents and children to your meeting. Briefly introduce the film and let the audience know that they are going to discuss it afterward. Show the film. Then ask parents and children to form two separate groups. Next ask the two large groups to form smaller groups of five to seven people each. Each small group is to have only parents or only preteens or teens.

Ask the group to discuss the film. Ask all groups questions about the film content such as "How did the film suggest people cope with rejection?" or "What did the students in the film feel about responsibility in friendships?" Ask the audience

members to discuss how some of the dramatizations of friendship problems could be resolved. After the discussion bring all the groups back together and ask the groups to report on their discussions. What were the groups' reactions to the film? What kinds of solutions to friendship problems did they come up with? How did the reactions of parents and preteens or teens differ? How were they the same? Show how the feelings of parents and preteens or teens about friendship are similar. Encourage further discussion based on what comes out of the small group discussions. Wind up the discussion with a summary and urge the participants to put what they've learned into action.

Brainstorm (30-40 minutes)

Goal: For parents and preteens or teens to discuss solutions to common friendship problems such as peer pressure.

Tools: Prepare a handout choosing three of the scenarios listed below.

Method: Tell the participants that they will be breaking up into small groups of five to seven people to brainstorm solutions to common friendship problems. Pass out your handouts while explaining that the groups will discuss each scenario. Read the first scenario, then ask the small groups to discuss it. After the discussion, ask each small group to report. Encourage comments and questions on the reports, then move on to the next scenario. After all three scenarios have been discussed, ask participants to come back together into one large group. Ask the participants what they learned in the brainstorming. Summarize the discussions and suggest that participants use their ideas for solving friendship problems in their everyday lives.

- You confided your secret feelings about James, a handsome and you're sure unattainable senior, to your friend Marcy. Now you discover that everyone in school is talking about it. You're sure Marcy told the world! What can you do?
- You and a bunch of your sixth-grade friends are hanging out at your house, and your parents won't be home for hours. Some of your friends suggest raiding your parents' liquor cabinet. You don't want to, but you also don't want your friends to think you're chicken. What can you do?
- You're checking out the latest comics at a local store with Barry. Barry suggests stealing some. You don't want to, but you don't want to lose Barry's friendship. What can you do?
- It seems like all the kids you know are no longer virgins, and your friends are beginning to tease you because you haven't done "it" yet. What can you do?

Tips for parents: Help your child be a good friend

Being a good friend

- **Take opportunities to talk with your children** about what it means to be a good friend. Television shows, songs, magazine articles about friendship and everyday events may provide chances to discuss the qualities of a good friend.
- **Help your children learn how to make good decisions** by allowing them to practice making decisions for themselves. Give your children guidelines on how to make decisions. Help them work through specific problems such as whether to go to Mary's or Joe's party.
- **Discuss imaginary problems** that people may encounter in their friendships. Use television, movies, books, magazine articles and everyday events as sources for your discussions. Ask your children, "What would you do?" Help your children think through possible ways to solve such problems.
- **Help your children develop responsibility.** Give them gradually increasing responsibilities as they grow. How can you decide what they are ready to take responsibility for? Try them. Let them know that growing up means not only greater privileges but also greater responsibility for the consequences of one's actions.

Resisting peer pressure

- **Let your children know that they will sometimes be tempted to try things that may be dangerous or are against family values.**
- **Remember that self-esteem and decision-making skills will help arm your children against negative peer pressure.**
- **Discuss ways to say "NO"** or escape a troublesome situation. For instance, teach your children retorts to challenges such as "You're chicken." Let your children know that displaying a confident front can often make other children back down.
- **Give your children the information they need** to make good decisions. Inform them about the dangers of drugs and alcohol. Talk with your children about sex and sexuality—the facts and your values.

References

1—*Helping Kids Make Friends* by S. Holly Stocking, Diana Arezzo and Shelley Leavitt, Argus Communications, 1979.

2—*Adolescent Peer Pressure*, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1981.

Resources

For the leader:

- *Responsive Parenting: Building Independence and Cooperation in Children* by Saf Lerman. This pamphlet is number nine in a series designed to help parents. American Guidance Service, Inc., Box 99, Circle Pines, MN 55014-1796. Cost: $4.25.
- *Getting Closer* by Ellen Rosenberg contains excellent chapters on friendship and popularity, dating and peer pressure. A must read for leaders *and* parents. The Berkley Publishing Group, 200 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016. Cost: $7.95.
- *Friends: How They Help . . . How They Hurt*, Sunburst Communications, Room TP 575, 39 Washington Ave., Pleasantville, NY 10570. Fee: $145 VHS, $125 filmstrip. Available on a 30-day review basis.

For the parent:

- *Getting Closer* by Ellen Rosenberg. See above.
- *Peer Pressure Reversal* by Sharon Scott gives examples and how-to advice on building children's ability to resist negative peer pressure. Human Resource Development Press, Inc., 22 Amherst Road, Amherst, MA 01002. Cost: $9.95.
- *Teach Your Child Decision Making* by John F. Clabby, PhD, and Mauricie J. Elias, PhD. Excellent step-by-step guide. Doubleday and Co., Inc., 245 Park Ave., New York, NY 10167. Cost: $8.95 paperback only.
- *How to Talk So Kids Will Listen and Listen So Kids Will Talk* by Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish. This is an excellent how-to guide with lots of examples. Avon Books, The Hearst Corporation, 1790 Broadway, New York, NY 10019. Cost: $7.95.

For the preteen and teen:

- *Growing Up Feeling Good* by Ellen Rosenberg contains excellent chapters on friendship, popularity, dating and peer pressure. An excellent book for preteens and young teens. Penguin USA, 120 Woodbine St., Bergenfield, NJ 07621; (800) 331-4624. Cost: $9.95.

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PARENTING

The Underdeveloped Skill

Objective

- To help parents learn ways to help their children develop into responsible adults

The facts

- More than 85 percent of teenage fathers will abandon their children and the mothers of those children. (1)
- More than 56 percent of students report that they did not wear a seat belt the last time they rode in a car, truck or van. (2)
- Nearly 27 percent of fatally injured 15- to 19-year-old drivers were intoxicated (3); 44 percent of tenth-graders and 32 percent of eighth-graders report they have ridden in a car when the driver has used drugs or alcohol. (2)
- Only 24 percent of sexually active teenage girls age 15 to 19 use contraception consistently. (4)

Taking responsibility for a mistake or wrongdoing can be hard, especially when teens haven't had practice developing responsibility through their childhood. Yet preteens and teens are making important choices every day. Without practice in making decisions, acting independently and accepting the consequences of mistakes and misbehaviors, they cannot develop into responsible adults.

Parents can help their children develop into responsible adults. Parents can start by giving their children responsibilities appropriate to their age and abilities. They can set household rules. When they set such rules, parents should also let children know what consequences will result if rules are broken. Discipline for breaking the rules or other unacceptable behavior should be related to the misbehavior, take place directly after the misbehavior and be explained to the children. To help children further, parents should foster their children's self-esteem, teach decision-making skills, set a good example and reward good behaviors.

Meeting ideas

For background information consult "Plan your parenting meetings carefully" and "Choose meeting activities" in the leader's guide.

Energizers

Make a list (15 minutes)

Goal: **To get parents thinking about ways to help their children be more responsible.**

Tools: **An easel and markers or chalkboard and chalk.**

Method: **Ask meeting participants to answer this question: "How can we help children learn to be responsible?" Remind participants that this is a brainstorming session. Participants should just call out their ideas without worrying about how good they are. Write down each idea. After the flow of ideas slows down, ask participants to comment on the list contents. Your list might begin to look something like this:**

- **Give them responsibilities**
- **Reward responsible behavior**
- **Ask them to participate in household chores**
- **Help them learn to make good decisions**
- **Respect their feelings**
- **Set a good example**

Ask questions such as "What kinds of responsibilities can children be given?" "What kinds of rewards can children be given for responsible behavior?" "How will respecting children's feelings help them become responsible?" After a brief discussion of this list, ask the participants to make a new list. This time they should answer this question: "How do parents discourage children from becoming responsible?" Make the new list and discuss it briefly. ***Move on to your core meeting activity.***

Kids make decisions (10 minutes)

Goal: **To show parents how often children have to make important decisions and the responsibility this places on children.**

Tools: **An easel and marker or chalkboard and chalk, stopwatch, apples, pens or pencils and paper.**

Method: **Break participants into two groups. Tell the groups that they have three minutes in which to make a list of the kinds of decisions that children may have to make in their daily lives. Members of the group with the longest list each get an apple. Give the groups paper and pens. Ask them to choose a recorder. Use a stopwatch and give the groups a start signal. When the three minutes are up, give the stop signal. Ask each group recorder to read their ideas, which you record on the easel or blackboard. Now, ask all participants to comment on the ideas given. There may be ideas such as whether to take drugs, cross the street, steal from the five-and dime, go to a movie your parents don't want you to see or play where your parents don't want you to. Briefly discuss the fact that some of the decisions are very serious and may have great consequences. Suggest that children need a chance to develop responsibility by practicing making decisions and accepting the consequences of their actions. Count up each group's ideas, and give the winning group their apples.** ***Go on to your core meeting activity.***

Core meeting activity

Brainstorm (60-75 minutes)

Goal: To give parents practice in planning ways to help their children develop responsibility.

Tools: Develop two handouts. Use the "Tips for parents" section of this card for one. Choose three of the four scenarios described on the reverse side to create the second handout.

Method: Distribute the "Tips for parents" handout to all meeting participants. Review the tip sheet's contents with the group and briefly discuss each tip. Ask the parents for comments or questions. Then ask the group to break into small discussion groups of three to five people and distribute the second handout. Tell participants that the purpose of this activity is to brainstorm ways to help preteens and teens develop greater responsibility. Ask the groups to discuss the first scenaro on their handout sheet. Allow five to 10 minutes for

discussion. Then ask the groups to report on their solutions, and allow for discussion of the group ideas. Once reports have been made and discussion is over, ask the groups to move on to discuss the second scenario. Repeat the procedure until all scenarios have been discussed and bring the groups back together. Ask participants the following questions: What did you discover in the brainstorms? Do you have any suggestions to add to the "Tips for parents" handout? Do you have any scenarios you'd like the group to brainstorm with them? Are there any questions or comments? Summarize the discussion and encourage parents to use what they've learned.

Here are the scenarios:

- Jill, 9, frequently forgets to clean up her playthings. Her parents have given her repeated warnings and even taken away her dessert after dinner. But she still hasn't learned to put her things away. What can her parents do?
- Madeline, 14, would like to buy her own clothes, but her mother, Maria, is afraid she won't be practical in her purchases and may buy clothes that Maria wouldn't approve of. What could Maria do?
- Previn, 12, earns money shining shoes. Usually he spends the money almost immediately and often feels he has nothing to show for it afterward. How can Previn's parents help him make more satisfactory use of his money?
- Jody, 18, has just finished her first semester away at college. Her parents have been providing her money for books and personal expenses, but Jody has been spending much more money that her parents can afford to give and more than they feel she needs. What can Jody's parents do?

Tips for parents: Help your child become a responsible adult

- **Start early.** Even toddlers can put away their toys if helped by parents.
- **Set household rules.** They help children develop responsibility. For instance, very young children can put their clothes in the hamper and older children can wash their clothes.
- **Enforce rules with established consequences.** For instance, clothing not placed in the hamper might not be washed.
- **Set rules that are important to the quality of your family life.** Don't set too many rules; they may become impossible for children to remember and for you to enforce. Explain the reason for rules and follow them yourself. Develop rules appropriate to the ages of your children.
- **Help your children meet their responsibilities.** If youngsters have trouble getting up in the morning for school, buy them an alarm clock. Show children how to keep lists, make a calendar or use reminder notes.
- **Give your children guidelines to help them meet certain responsibilities.** For instance, if you give your children an allowance from which they are expected to take daily expenses such as lunch, let them know how you expect them to spend the money. Also, let them know the penalties for misspending money.
- **Reward your children's efforts to act responsibly.** A reward can be a simple "Thank you!" or a special treat.
- **Show your children how much you care about them.** Give them support even when they fail. Let them know that even though you may disapprove of their behavior you still love them.
- **Show your children that you are confident in their abilities.** Consider allowing your children to choose their own household responsibilities or rotating responsibilities among family members. Doing so will help in developing a cooperative spirit among parents and children.
- **Start a family council.** Family councils give children practice in making decisions, understanding family rules and developing cooperation and responsibility. Family councils can make decisions such as where to go on a family vacation. To start a family council, pick a regular meeting time and place where all family members can come together. The council should be devoted to positive efforts to solve family problems and make rules and decisions. Name-calling and scolding should not be allowed. Although complaints can be aired in a family council, efforts should be made by all members to prevent council meetings from becoming gripe sessions. Determine how decisions will be made in the family council. Expect all members to abide by decisions. If strong feelings are making the solution to a problem impossible, delay discussion until the next meeting.
- **If you find your children cannot live up to a responsibility,** think about whether they are too young to do what is expected or consider ways to assist them.

References

1—"Increasing Self-Esteem in Vulnerable Students" by Sol Gordon and Kathleen Everly from *Impact '85*, Institute for Family Research and Education, Syracuse University, Syracuse, N.Y.

2—"National Adolescent Student Health Survey," 1988, American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, Reston, VA.

3—*Buckle Up America!*, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 1990.

4—*Talk, Listen, Care Kit*, Harvard Community Health Plan Foundation, 1989.

Resources

For the leader or parent:

- *Teach Your Child Decision Making* by John F. Clabby, PhD, and Maurice J. Elias, PhD. A step-by-step guide with lots of examples. Doubleday & Company, Inc., 245 Park Ave., New York, NY 10167. Cost: $8.95 paperback only.
- *Responsive Parenting: Building Independence and Cooperation in Children* by Saf Lerman. This pamphlet is number nine in a series designed to help parents. American Guidance Service, Inc., Circle Pines, MN 55014-1796. Cost: $4.25.
- *How to Raise a Responsible Child* by Shirley Gould. St. Martin's Press, Inc., 175 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10010. Cost: $4.95 plus $1.25 for shipping and handling.

For the preteen and teen:

- *Choices* and *Challenges*, both by Mindy Bingham, Judy Edmondson and Sandy Stryker, are excellent workbooks for girls and boys respectively. They cover topics such as career planning, marriage and children. Advocacy Press, PO Box 236, Santa Barbara, CA 93102. Cost: $14.25.
- *Self-Discovery* by Gilda Gussin and Ann Buxbaum is a workbook for teens covering goals and decision making among other topics. Network Publishing Co., PO Box 1830, Santa Cruz, CA 95061; (408) 438-4080. Cost: $12.95.

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PURPLE TAB

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PARENTING

The Underdeveloped Skill

Objectives

- To help parents understand the problems young people face from negative peer pressure
- To help parents teach preteens and teens refusal skills

The facts

- Research shows that the single most important factor that leads to arrest for young people ages 10 through 16 is negative peer pressure. (1)
- More than half of all teenage deaths are related to alcohol or other drugs, 49 percent of high school students drink in cars and another 40,000 young people suffer serious highway injuries linked to alcohol. (1)
- Within six months of becoming sexually active, half of all teenage girls become pregnant; eight out of 10 pregnant teens drop out of school. (1)

Your son wants the latest superstar basketball shoes—all his friends have them. Your daughter wants to cut her hair to look just like her best friend. Young people want to be accepted by their friends. They want to belong—to look, act and even think just like their friends. This is *peer pressure*, and most of the time there's nothing wrong with it.

But some kinds of peer pressure can be harmful. Sometimes adolescents' friends urge them to lie, cheat, steal, gossip, smoke or drink. It's not easy to resist this kind of pressure. Kids are afraid that refusing to go along, even when they know it's wrong, will leave them alone and without friends.

Parents can help their kids develop strong personalities and self-esteem to enable them to think and act independently and make good decisions based on their own understanding and family values.

And parents can help their kids understand that it's OK to disagree with friends because real friends will respect and support each other's decisions.

Meeting Ideas

For background information consult "Plan your parenting meetings carefully" and "Choose meeting activities" in the leader's guide. Consult the cards on making good decisions and being a good friend since these are related.

Energizer

Start your meeting with an energizer to get your audience's interest!

Everybody else is doing it (15 minutes)

Goal: **To help parents understand that it's tough to say no to a friend.**

Tools: **An easel or blackboard, markers or chalk.**

Method: **Ask the adults in the audience to think back to when they were adolescents. Tell the participants that the group is going to brainstorm to decide what is good or bad peer pressure and how to resist bad peer pressure. Adults should think of examples of both from their teen years. Preteens and teens should think of recent examples. Make a "positive" column and a "negative" column. Your columns should start to look like this after a few minutes of brainstorming:**

Positive—My friends wanted me to:

- **Learn a new dance step**
- **Perform better in a sport or hobby**
- **Get the latest hairstyle**
- **Meet some new kids on the block**

Negative—my friends wanted me to:

- **Lie to my parents about finishing my homework so I could go out**
- **Cheat on an exam**
- **Shoplift from a store**
- **Smoke cigarettes to look cool**

Write down all the thoughts of the group. If the brainstorming lags, help it along by using the above examples or, better still, asking a question that will spark the group's thoughts. When the lists are long enough, ask the group to comment on them. Is there anything listed as positive that is really negative? How about the reverse? Do people have anything they want to add?

Move on to the second part of the brainstorming. Ask the group to talk about refusing to get involved in bad behavior. What do they do or say to talk a friend out of a bad idea? Do they go along with the negative peer pressure and make a mistake? How do they feel about that? Are they able to say no? Is that a hard thing to do, especially with a good friend? How does that make them feel? To whom are they able to talk? Are their parents available for advice? Encourage everyone to speak up. Remember, no one is perfect and we've all made mistakes; let's see what we can learn from each other. *Go on to your core meeting activity.*

Core meeting activities

Film (1 hour)

- *Goal:* To get meeting participants to talk about refusal skills—what they are and how they work.
- *Tools:* Order the film *Keeping Out of Trouble, Staying in Control* as a discussion starter for parents and children. This is a highly effective video that shows students how they can use refusal skills to handle negative peer pressure, stay out of trouble and still keep their friends and have fun. The film focuses on representative situations in the lives of four teens: a high school senior who loses his driver's license and almost his best friend because of an alcohol-related traffic accident, a junior who gets arrested with a friend for shoplifting, a sophomore who is pressured to spend the night with her boyfriend and a senior who is coaxed by a friend to use drugs.

- *Methods:* Preview the film. Invite both parents and children to your meeting. Briefly introduce the film and let the audience know that they are going to discuss it afterward. Show the film. Ask the audience to break up into smaller groups of five to seven people each.

Ask the groups to discuss the film. Ask all groups questions about the film content, such as "How did the film suggest teens deal with negative peer pressure?" "What did the kids learn as a result of their mistakes?" "Could these mistakes have been avoided?" After discussion bring all the groups back together. What were the reactions to the film? What kinds of solutions to the problems did the groups suggest? If there are preteens and teens in the audience, how did their reactions differ from the adults? Can kids and their parents talk about these problems? Encourage further discussion based on what comes out of the smaller groups. End with a summary and urge everyone to put what they've learned into practice.

Brainstorm (30-45 minutes)

- *Goal:* For parents and children to discuss good ways to deal with bad ideas from friends.
- *Tools:* Prepare a handout choosing three of the scenarios listed below.
- *Method:* Tell the group to break into small groups of five to seven people to brainstorm solutions to negative peer pressure. Distribute the handouts while explaining that the groups will discuss each scenario. Read the first scenario, then ask the small groups to discuss it. After the discussion ask each small group to give a report. Encourage comments and questions in the reports, then move on to the next scenario. After all three scenarios have been discussed, ask participants to come back together into one large group. Ask the participants what they learned in the brainstorming. Summarize the discussions and suggest that participants use their ideas for solving peer pressure problems in their everyday lives.

- You're checking out the latest comics at a local store with Steve. Steve suggests stealing a few. You don't want to, but you're afraid Steve won't like you anymore if you don't. What do you do?
- You're doing well in math, but your friend Jamilah is not. There's a big test tomorrow, and Jamilah wants you to sit next to her and slip her the answers. Can you find a better way to help her and keep her friendship?
- You don't drink alcohol, but your friend Betty has taken a bottle of vodka from her parents' bar. Instead of painting posters for the school's Halloween party, Betty wants to have a few drinks. What do you do?
- You're playing ball with your pals when Jerry pulls out a pack of cigarettes and offers you one. You resist, but the other guys, including your best friend, call you chicken. What do you do?

Tips for parents

- **Create a loving and open atmosphere at home.** Your kids need their friends, but they need *you* too. They want to know what you think.
- **Don't fight over little things.** Let kids decide things like haircuts and fashion. Agree on the smaller things so you and your kids feel free to talk about the more important aspects of peer pressure.
- **Don't lecture.** It's tempting and might work for very small children, but teens will tune you right out. Instead, clearly explain the boundaries of good behavior and establish rules for what is unacceptable. Your kids will understand your expectations.
- **Be a positive role model.** Talk is cheap, but actions are noticed. If you don't want your child to smoke, don't smoke yourself. If you smoke now, quit.
- **Help your child find an area in which to excel.** Kids who feel good about their accomplishments feel good about themselves and are better able to speak up for what they believe.
- **Encourage your kids to have lots of friends.** Disagreeing with one friend is not so painful for kids who have several friends.
- **Be sympathetic.** It's tough to disagree with friends; that's why it's so easy to give in. Teach your kids that disagreements are part of life and can be a learning experience.
- **Don't "bad-mouth" a friend doing something wrong.** Teens' loyalties will be torn, and they will defend their friend. Instead, encourage kids to wonder why the friend is behaving this way.
- **Teach your kids to be assertive.** Persistent reasoning combined with good alternatives to bad behavior—and walking away when necessary—can gain the respect of friends. Speaking up is hard, but it doesn't have to mean losing a good friend.
- **Show your kids you love them.** Frequent hugs and kisses, roughhousing and quiet moments for talking show your kids how important they are to you. Kids who feel loved act confidently with their peers.

References

1—*How to Say No and Keep Your Friends*, Sharon Scott, Human Resource Development Press, Inc., 1986.

Resources

For the leader and parent:

- *Responsible Parenting: Building Independence and Cooperation in Children* by Saf Lerman. This pamphlet is number nine in a series designed to help parents. American Guidance Service, Inc., Box 99, Circle Pines, MN 55014-1796. Cost: $4.25.
- *Friends: How They Help . . . How They Hurt*, Sunburst Communications, TJ7, 39 Washington Ave., Pleasantville, NY 10570; (800) 431-1934. Cost: $145 VHS, $125 filmstrip. Available on a 30-day review basis.
- *Keeping Out of Trouble, Staying Out of Trouble*, 17 minutes. Research Press, Video Connections, Box 3177, Dept. A, Champaign, IL 61826; (217) 352-3273. Cost: $190, VHS. Available on a 30-day review basis.
- *The Parent/Child Manual on Peer Pressure* by Maria Sullivan. A great book for parents to use with their kids. Emphasizes teaching assertive thinking in a compassionate way. St. Martin's Press, 175 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10010. Cost: $12.95.

For the preteen and teen:

- *How to Say No and Keep Your Friends* by Sharon Scott, 1986. How to recognize a bad situation; 10 ways to way no and keep your friends. Human Resource Development Press, Inc., 22 Amherst Road, Amherst, MA; (413) 253-3488 (MA), (800) 822-2801 (outside MS). Cost: $7.95.

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PARENTING

The Underdeveloped Skill

Objectives

- To get parents to consider their own values toward drugs
- To present facts on drugs and drug use
- To give parents concrete suggestions on talking to their children about drugs

The facts

- Thirteen percent of all high school seniors in 1988 smoked marijuana daily. (2)
- More than 33 percent of seniors report using an illicit drug other than marijuana. (2)
- By age 25, nearly 40 percent of all youth have tried cocaine, and as early as their senior year, 12 percent of seniors have tried crack. (1)
- As many as 500,000 male high school seniors—6.6 percent—use or have used steroids. More than 66 percent first tried steroids when they were 16 or younger. (3)
- America's young adults show a level of involvement with illicit drugs greater than teens of any other industrialized nation in the world. (1)

Teens say drug abuse is the biggest problem they face, bigger than alcoholism and unemployment. Children have to make decisions about drug abstinence or use at a very early age. Parents need to prepare their children to make these and other important decisions.

Meeting ideas

Consult "Plan your parenting meetings carefully" and "Choose meeting activities" in the leader's guide for background information. Also consult the meeting cards on alcohol, smoking and self-esteem since they are related. Copy "The facts" and "Tips for parents" to hand out to the audience as well as the reproducible on self-esteem, *Helping children like themselves.*

Energizers

Start your meeting with an energizer to get your audience's interest!

Quiz (15 minutes)

Goal: **To see what parents already know about drugs and to teach them something new.**

Tools: **Make copies for all participants of the reproducible *Smoking, alcohol and drugs quiz* in this box. Supply pencils.**

Method: **Pass out the quiz and ask participants not to look at the answers on the reverse side. Tell the participants to answer all the questions. After everyone has answered all the questions, turn the quiz over and discuss each answer. *Go on to the core meeting activity.***

Brainstorm (20 minutes)

Goal: **To make parents aware of the reasons that their teens might become involved in drugs and the ways that their involvement might be prevented.**

Tools: **A flipchart and markers or chalkboard and chalk.**

Method: **Ask participants for reasons that preteens or teens might get involved in drugs. Remind participants that this is a brainstorming session and that all suggestions are worthy. Write down each comment. After the comments ask the participants to discuss the contents of the list. Your list might look like this:**

- **Boredom**
- **Low self-esteem**
- **Peer pressure**
- **Poor decision-making abilities**
- **Too much self-confidence ("*I* can't get addicted")**
- **Lack of alternate activities**

Now that you have a list, ask participants to give possible solutions to the problem. These might include family solutions such as teaching teens to make decisions as well as community solutions such as an alcohol- and drug-free teen center. *Go on to the core meeting activity.*

Core meeting activity

Role playing (45 minutes)

Goal: To help parents practice their communication skills.

Tools: Reproduce the *Talking skills/Listening skills* handout. Copy three role-playing situations from the choices below or make up three of your own. Set up the room so that the participants can easily break into groups of three.

- Louis, 12, is concerned about friends at school who are experimenting with alcohol and drugs. He's feeling pressured—afraid of trying yet curious. How could his father, Teddy, an occasional drinker, explain his drinking habits in relation to his beliefs about why Louis should not drink or use drugs?
- Allison, 15, has been acting strangely recently. Her mother suspects that she might be taking drugs. How can her mother determine whether she's on drugs? What should she do to assist her daughter?
- Michael, 13, is rebellious and uncooperative. His father, Joel, is afraid that this rebellion against his parents will lead to risk-taking behavior like drinking or taking drugs. What can Joel do to prevent this?
- Frances, a mother, does not drink, smoke or take any drugs. She knows that problem drinkers often come from families of abstainers. How can she explain her attitude toward

drinking, smoking and drugs in such a way that her child makes an intelligent decision about drugs?

Method: Distribute *Talking skills/Listening skills.* Discuss the various ways to improve communication that it suggests. Tell the group that they will be practicing these methods by role playing. Ask the participants to break into groups of three. Each situation will have a parent, a child and an observer character. Ask the "parent" and the "child" to act out the first role-playing situation. Ask the observer to pay attention to the communication between "parent" and "child." Allow each situation to continue for five minutes. After each role-playing, ask the "parent" and the "child" to describe how it felt to be their characters. Ask the observer to report what happened between the "parent" and the "child." Ask what communication problems the two had. Hold a brief discussion. Then ask the three to rotate roles within their group and to hold the next role playing. After the final role playing, bring the group back together to discuss the experience and what they learned. Be ready to ask questions such as the following: "What made it hard to listen to the other person?" "What kinds of things stood in the way of good communication?" Sum up the discussion and congratulate the participants on their efforts.

Tips for parents

- **Talk to your spouse** about your values. Make sure you agree with each other about what you say and how you say it to your child.
- **Give your views and accurate information** whenever the occasion presents itself. When attitudes about drugs are shown on television, in the newspaper or in a movie, either reinforce them if they are in agreement with your values or explain why the attitudes are not acceptable.
- **Be clear** with your children and yourself about your rules. Tell your children what you expect from them and why. Tell them what the consequences will be if they don't comply with your wishes. Be realistic about any consequences and follow through when rules are broken.
- **Help your children practice saying no.** Give them little role-playing situations—"What would you do if . . .?"—so that they become accustomed to handling a tempting situation.
- **Set a good example.** Don't use illegal drugs, and don't give your children the idea that drugs of any sort, such as alcohol, tranquilizers or cigarettes, can solve problems.
- **Provide activities** for your children in areas of interest to them. Possible interests are athletics, dance, exercise, outdoor work, yoga, creative experiences or exploring the beauty in anything—nature, buildings, people, art.
- **Build your children's self-esteem** so that they don't feel the need to do something destructive just to belong to a group.
- **Be aware** of the difference between normal adolescent behaviors such as risk taking and rebellion and extreme behaviors that could be evidence of drug abuse. Some signs are:
  - Preoccupation with partying
  - A decrease in extracurricular activities
  - An increase in tardiness
  - Abrupt mood swings
  - Violent behavior

If you suspect that your preteen or teen is abusing drugs, talk to the school counselor, your doctor, a counselor at the local mental health center, parents of chemical abusers or Al-Anon.

References

1—*Drug Use, Drinking and Smoking: National Survey Results from High School, College and Young Adult Populations, 1975-1988,* Lloyd D. Johnston, PhD; Patrick M. O'Malley, PhD; and Jerald G. Bachman, PhD, University of Michigan Institute for Social Research, 1989.

2—U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service Alcohol, Drug Abuse and Mental Health Administration, 1989.

3—*Sports Illustrated,* Spring 1988.

Resources

For the leader:

- *Wasted: A True Story,* from the American Council for Drug Education, is a 22-minute case history of a teenage ex-substance abuser. He and his sisters tell how his problem affected him and his family. It mentions positive alternatives to taking drugs. A discussion guide is included. The American Council for Drug Education Inc., 204 Monroe St., Suite 110, Rockville, MD 20850; (301) 294-0600. Rental: $40 for five days.
- For a catalog of pamphlets and materials for meetings and projects write: The American Council for Drug Education, Suite 110, Rockville MD, 20850; (301) 294-0600.
- For health information and an information referral service call the National Health Clearinghouse Hotline, (800) 336-4797 or (703) 522-2590 (VA).
- *What You Can Do About Drug Abuse in America* is a good starting reference for leaders and parents. For this and other pamphlets and films on drug abuse, write: National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), Prevention Branch, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, MD 20857; (301) 468-2600 for free pamphlets, a catalog of free films and information and technical assistance to groups with prevention activities.
- For information on prevention activities contact Parent Resources in Drug Education (PRIDE), 50 Hurt Plaza, Atlanta, GA 30303; (800) 67-PRIDE.
- In the community, for speakers or information, contact parents who may be willing to share their experiences with a child who has entered or completed a substance abuse program, family service agencies, the United Way, mental health centers, school guidance counselors, doctors or clinics, public health department, Lions Club or Elks Club.

For the parent:

- *A Gift for Life: Helping Your Children Stay Drug and Alcohol Free* is a good documentary on the dangers of substance abuse. American Council for Drug Education, 204 Monroe St., Suite 110, Rockville, MD 20850; (301) 294-0600. Cost: $29.95.

For the preteen and teen:

- For questions about cocaine counseling and referral, call the cocaine treatment referral center, (800) COCAINE, or the NIDA hotline, (800) 662-HELP.
- *Steroids: A Shortcut to Make-Believe Muscles* tells what steroids are and shows Olympic athletes training without using steroids. KIDSRIGHTS, 3700 Progress Blvd., Mount Dora, FL 32757, (800) 892-KIDS. Rental: $50 for three days.
- *Peer Pressure: It's OK to Say No* is a pamphlet by the Committees of Correspondence, 57 Conant St., Room 113, Danvers, MA 01923, (508) 774-2641. Cost: $15 for 100.

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PARENTING

The Underdeveloped Skill

Objectives

- To give parents the facts about alcohol use and abuse
- To show parents the effect of peers and home life on an adolescent's decision to drink or not to drink.
- To give parents suggestions for influencing their children's attitudes and drinking habits

The facts

- One in 23 high school seniors drinks alcohol every day, and nearly two in five become intoxicated at least once every two weeks. (1)
- A 1988 survey of high school seniors states that 92 percent admit using alcohol; one-third of all teenagers have problems related to their alcohol consumption. (1)
- Attitudes concerning alcohol use are formed early—usually during preadolescence and adolescence. (1)
- Fifty-one percent of sixth-graders experience peer pressure to drink beer, wine or liquor. (1)
- Nearly 27 percent of fatally injured 15- to 19-year-old drivers are intoxicated. (2)
- Teenagers who are heavy drinkers in high school are more likely to develop serious problems in young adulthood. (3)
- Alcohol use is involved in up to 50 percent of spousal abuse cases, 49 percent of all murders, 68 percent of manslaughter charges, between 20 percent and 35 percent of suicides, more than 62 percent of assaults, 52 percent of rapes and 38 percent of child abuse fatalities. (1)

As adolescents develop, they try various adult activities. Drinking can be an attempt to achieve adult status.

Attitudes about drinking are usually formed before adolescence. Therefore, *parents*, as well as pressure and encouragement from close friends, help determine drinking habits.

Meeting ideas

Consult "Plan your parenting meetings carefully" and "Choose meeting activities" in the leader's guide for background meeting cards on drugs and self-esteem since they are related. Copy "The facts" and "Tips for parents" for handouts for the participants.

Energizers

Start your meeting with an energizer to get your audience's interest!

Quiz (20 minutes)

***Goal:* To teach parents basic facts about alcohol and its effects.**

***Tools:* Copy the reproducible *Smoking, alcohol and drug quiz* or get copies of the quiz *How Much Do You Know About Drinking and Driving?* (see "Resources/For the preteen and teen").**

Method:* Pass out copies of the quiz. Tell the audience not to look at the answers on the reverse side and to answer all the questions. After the quiz, discuss the answers. *Go on to the core meeting activity.

Ad display (15-20 minutes)

***Goal:* To show parents how alcohol is portrayed by advertising and how the ads are used to entice teens and others to drink.**

***Tools:* A variety of popular magazines, enough copies for each meeting participant. Three poster boards and easels to hang up many advertisements from the magazines, several rolls of tape.**

Method:* Divide the audience into three groups. Explain to the groups that they are going to perform a race. Their object is to create a "Buy me!" poster with advertisements culled from the magazines you've provided. The ads must be for alcohol or include pictures of people drinking alcoholic beverages. Each group will have an equal-size poster board to fill and equal numbers of rolls of tape, magazines and participants. The first group to finish wins the race. To make the effort a little more exciting you might furnish a prize. Give them 30 seconds to prepare. Time the activity. Tell them to start the race. Once the first group finishes its poster, stop the race. Tell the three groups how long it took to fill up the first poster board. Observe how far the others got on their posters. Ask the participants what they observe about the exercise. What about the number of ads? Do the ads seem to have any common themes? How do they feel about the ads? What do they think children and teens might feel about the ads? Are the ads misleading? Are the models sexy, athletic, successful? Compare the advertising images with the reality of drunkenness. Can their preteens and teens tell the difference? *Go on to the core meeting activity.

Core meeting activity

Role playing (45 minutes)

Goal: To help parents practice their communication skills.

Tools: Reproduce the *Talking skills/Listening skills* handout. Copy three role-playing situations for a handout. Choose from the following or create your own. Set up the room so participants can easily break into groups of three.

- Your 16-year-old daughter is about to leave for the year's most important party. She has been excited about it for the last three weeks. As she heads out the door, she mentions that the host's father is providing a keg of beer to celebrate the football team's winning season. What do you do?
- Your 17-year-old returns home Sunday morning at 3:00. He awakens you by driving the car into the trash cans and singing "The Star Spangled Banner" at the top of his lungs. He's obviously drunk but has never done this before. What do you do?
- Your 14-year-old comes in from the movies with alcohol on his breath. He's behaving in a perfectly normal manner and seems to be in complete control of himself. What do you do?
- You and your child are watching a show on television.

The show depicts a group of teenagers sitting on a blanket at the beach drinking beer and singing. The leader gets up, and they all follow him to a pickup truck. They pile in, still drinking their beer, and zoom off into the darkness. A commercial follows. What do you do?

Method: Distribute and explain *Talking skills/Listening skills.* Discuss the various ways to improve communication that it suggests. Tell the group they will be practicing these skills by role playing. Ask the participants to break into groups of three. For each role playing there will be an observer, a parent and a child. Ask the "parent" and "child" to act out the first role-playing situation. Ask the observer to note the way the parent and child communicate. Allow each role-playing situation to continue for five minutes. After each role playing, ask the "parent" and the "child" to describe how it felt to be their characters. Ask the observer to report what happened between the "parent" and the "child." Ask what communication problems the two had. Hold a brief discussion and then ask the three to rotate roles within their group and to role play the next situation. Everyone will have a chance to play all three parts. After the final role playing, bring the group back together to discuss the experience and what they learned. Be ready to ask questions such as "What made it hard to listen to the other person?" and "What kinds of things stood in the way of good communication?" Sum up the discussion and congratulate the players on their efforts.

Tips for parents

- **Set a good example.** Limit your drinking or abstain. Don't drink and drive. Serve nonalcoholic drinks at parties and serve food with drinks. Don't push drinks on your guests. Demonstrate positive ways of handling stress without drinking. Be firm with guests who have drunk too much. Don't *ever* allow friends or family to drink and drive.
- **Talk to your children.** Explain *why* you drink or don't drink.
- **Develop assertiveness in your children** as well as self-esteem. With these strengths they will be better able to withstand peer pressure. Give them a few one-liners they can use against peer pressure to drink.
- **Have rules for any party your teen gives** such as no drinking, a specific number of lights on, off-limit rooms, number of people on guest list. Be present at the party to keep everything under control.
- **Make it easy for your children to leave** if a situation gets uncomfortable. Sometimes your preteens or teens will be at a party or other event where their friends will start drinking. Give them money for a taxi or offer to pick them up if they call so that they will not feel obligated to stay. Make it clear to them that you won't judge them on the basis of what their peers do.
- **Know the signs** that suggest that your child *could* be experimenting with alcohol:
  - Preoccupation with partying
  - Decrease in extracurricular activities
  - Increase in tardiness
  - Abrupt mood swings
  - Drop in grades

References

1—*Prevention Plus II Tools for Creating and Sustaining Drug-Free Communities*, Office of Substance Abuse Prevention, 1989.

2—*Buckle Up America*, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 1990.

3—*Chicago Tribune*, July 1988.

Resources

For the leader:

- *Maybe I Am: The Story of a Teenage Alcoholic*, by Human Relations Media, is a set of two 15-minute filmstrips. Order them from: Human Relations Media, 175 Tompkins Ave., Pleasantville, NY 10570, (800) 431-2050 (New York—(914) 769-6900 collect). Cost: $145 plus $5.90 shipping and handling. Free preview for 30 days.
- *What Is Alcohol and Why Do People Drink?* provides basic information about the history, effects and social role of alcohol and the laws and liabilities that regulate it. A list of readings and resources is included. Rutgers Center of Alcohol Studies, PO Box 969, Piscataway, NJ 08855; (201) 932-2190.
- *The Most Frequently Asked Questions About Alcoholism*, by the American Council on Alcoholism, is a pamphlet that describes the symptoms of alcoholism, the positive and negative reasons that a person drinks and ways to help a suspected alcoholic. For this pamphlet and other information, write the American Council on Alcoholism Inc., 5024 Campbell Blvd. Suite H, Baltimore, MD 21236; (800) 527-5344. Cost: 20 cents per copy.

The following are good sources for more information, resources or speakers:

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)
400 Seventh St. SW
Washington, DC 20590
(202) 426-1828

National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information
PO Box 2345
Rockville, MD 20852
(301) 468-2600

Be Smart, Don't Start is a bimonthly newsletter from the Office of Substance Abuse Prevention
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, MD 20857
(301) 468-2600

National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors
440 N. Capitol St. NWE. Suite 530
Washington, DC 20001
(202) 783-6868

Mental health centers

Doctors or nurses

Alcoholism rehabilitation units

For the preteen and teen:

- Alateen/AlAnon, PO Box 862, Midtown Station, New York, NY 10018; (212) 302-7240.
- Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), General Service Office, PO Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163; (212) 686-1100.
- *How Much Do You Know About Drinking And Driving? A Self-Evaluation For Teenagers*, from NHTSA, is a booket designed to help teenagers make decisions about drinking and driving. Order them from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 400 Seventh St. SW, Washington, DC 20590. Free.

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PARENTING

The Underdeveloped Skill

Objectives

- To teach parents the facts about smoking
- To show parents the social pressures that preteens and teens face to smoke
- To give parents tips to overcome these pressures for themselves and their teens by effective communication

The facts

- The percentage of junior high school students smoking in 1988-89 jumped by 8 percent since 1984-85, from 20 percent to 28 percent. (1)
- Four-fifths of smokers born since 1935 started smoking before age 21. The proportion of smokers who begin smoking during adolescence has been increasing, especially among women. Each day more than 3,000 children start smoking. (2)
- Between 25 and 40 out of every 100 smokers will die as a result of smoking, each dying around 15 years earlier than normal life expectancy. (2)
- Smoking impairs hearing, ages the skin prematurely, increases lower back pain due to excessive coughing and increases loss of bone mass and the risk of having an ulcer. It also affects the taste of food, decreases the ability to smell, causes hacking coughs, bad breath and mouth infections, interferes with normal breathing, reduces stamina and makes smokers and those around them more susceptible to colds and flu. (3) (4)
- Chewing or dipping smokeless tobacco can lead to a multitude of problems. It can cause oral cancer and high blood pressure. It causes nicotine addiction as readily as cigarettes do. In addition, chewing or dipping cause bad breath, bad teeth and gum disease. Eleven million to 22 million Americans use it regularly; use among children and adolescents is rapidly increasing. Twelve percent of boys and 1 percent of girls have chewed tobacco or used snuff. (5) (6)
- Clove cigarettes, generally considered a "safe" alternative to cigarettes because the cloves are considered "herbal," have been involved in more and more cases of disease and death. Young clove cigarette smokers see their doctors for a variety of symptoms not seen in other young people—coughing up blood, nosebleeds, severe sore throats and upper respiratory infections. The cigarettes contain about 60 percent tobacco and 40 percent ground cloves. (7)

It's encouraging to note that society overall is frowning on the use of tobacco. The number of teen smokers has dropped from 28.8 percent of high school seniors in 1978 to 18.7 percent in 1984, paralleling a similar but not as dramatic drop in the adult smoking rate. Less than 10 percent of entering college freshmen are smokers. Since attitudes toward smoking are determined by age 13, the drop could possibly be due to parents and teachers talking earlier with children about smoking. (5) (8)

But, as indicated in the facts, adolescents continue to be the main at-risk segment of the population. Even with this drop in use, one million teens start smoking every year. One hundred thousand preteens are smokers. The real risks and the perceived maturity and sophistication associated with smoking are appealing to some adolescents. Cigarettes are even more attractive to teens when seen as a means of admission to a desired peer group. The teens most likely to smoke are those whose friends smoke. (9) (10) (11)

Meeting ideas

Consult "Plan your parenting meetings carefully" and "Choose meeting activities" in the leader's guide for background information. Also consult the meeting card on fitness since it is related. Print and pass out a sheet with "The facts" and "Tips for parents" to all participants.

Energizers

Start your meeting with an energizer to get your audience involved.

Ad display (15-20 minutes)

Goal: **To show the participants how advertising is used to entice teens.**

Tools: **A variety of popular magazines, enough copies for each meeting participant. Three poster boards and easels to hang up many advertisements from the magazines, several rolls of tape.**

Method: **Divide the audience into three groups. Explain to the groups that they are going to hold a race. Their object is to create a "Buy me!" poster with advertisements culled from the magazines you've provided. The ads must be for cigarettes or smokeless tobacco or include pictures of people smoking. Each group will have an equal-size poster board to fill and equal numbers of rolls of tape, magazines and participants. The first group to finish wins the race. To make the effort a little more exciting you might furnish a prize. Give them 30 seconds to prepare. Time the activity. Tell them to start the race. Once the first group finishes its poster, stop the race. Tell the three groups how long it took to fill up the first poster board. Observe how far the others get on their posters. Ask the participants what they observe about the exercise. What about the number of ads? Do the ads seem to have any common themes? How do they feel about the ads? What do they think children and teens might feel about the ads? Are the ads misleading? Are the models sexy, athletic, successful? Compare the advertising images with the way smokers are generally perceived by nonsmokers.** ***Go on to the core meeting activity.***

Brainstorm (20 minutes)

Goal: **To show the two sides of the smoking debate—reasons for starting to smoke and reasons for stopping.**

Tools: **Flipchart and markers or blackboard and chalk.**

Method: **Divide the flipchart into two columns. Head one column "Why people *start* smoking" and the other "Why people *stop* smoking." Ask the participants to brainstorm reasons that people start and why they stop. Write their responses on the board. Discuss the answers. Point out that teens often start smoking to be part of the group or to distance themselves from their parents and are unable to stop when those reasons for smoking are no longer valid, so the emphasis should be on *preventing* them from ever starting to smoke.** ***Go on to the core meeting activity.***

Core meeting activities

Film (1 hour)

Goal: To make parents aware of the pressures their children face in deciding to smoke or not to smoke.

Tools: Choose from the films listed in "Resources" or consult your local school, library or concerned community group for other possible films. *Kids on Smoking* is a film for preteens that would be useful for parents to see how preteens decide whether or not to smoke. To order this or other films see "Resources/For the leader."

Method: View the film before you show it so you can be sure it applies in your community and so you can properly lead a discussion. Briefly state to your audience what the film is about. Say you want to discuss it later and show the film. After the film, ask for comments. Encourage discussion by referring to events, ideas and values expressed in the film such as "What are your feelings about . . .?" "What is your reaction to . . .?" "Do you agree with . . .? If so, why?"

Smoking debate (1 hour)

Goal: To get parents to think about smoking issues that affect them and their children and to compare their views to those of others.

Tools: Chalkboard and chalk.

Method: Make up your own topic or choose from topics such as the following: having smoking areas on the schoolgrounds, raising the minimum age for buying cigarettes or outlawing cigarette vending machines. Invite students, cigarette vendors, doctors, American Lung Association representatives—anyone who might be interested in giving an opinion. Have the invited guests and any interested members of the audience divide into two discussion groups—those who are for one of the sides and those who are against. Have each discussion group "caucus" for 10 minutes. Uncommitted audience members can observe the "for" and "against" groups. Then have each side choose a representative to state their opinion. Call for questions and comments from the audience. Ask the audience how they feel about the issues. Close by summarizing.

Tips for parents

- **Explain to your preteens and teens the effect of smoking on their appearance.** Point out that smoking causes bad breath, yellow teeth, smelly hair, burn holes in clothing and furniture, irritated eyes, phlegm and a hacking cough. These items are relevant to the everyday life of preteens and teens. They will understand this better than "increased cancer risk 40 years from now." (6)
- **Address the issue of peer pressure**—tell your teens that only 10 percent of all teens smoke. Real friends will respect them more for making their own decision. (6)
- **Set a good example for your children.** If you smoke, stop! Explain to them how and why you started smoking and why you find it difficult but necessary to stop—your health, the health of your children, your appearance, the smell of the house or household money better spent on other things. Whatever the reason, share it with your children and let them support you.

References

1—*PRIDE Quarterly*, Fall 1989.

2—*Reducing the Health Consequences of Smoking, 25 Years of Progress*, a report of the Surgeon General, 1989, Executive Summary.

3—*Breathing Easy*, Metropolitan Pittsburgh Public Broadcasting, Inc., November 14, 1985.

4—"It's Not Just the Lungs," *Herald-Leader*, Menominee, MI, December 29, 1984.

5—*Smoking and Health Report*, Center for Health and Safety Studies, April 1986.

6—*Growing Up Drug Free: A Parent's Guide to Prevention*, U.S. Department of Education, 1990.

7—*Clove Cigarettes*, American Lung Association of San Diego and Imperial Counties, 1985.

8—*Smoking and Health Reporter*, April 1985.

9—"Reducing Adolescent Smoking: A Comparison of Peer-Led, Teacher-Led and Expert Intervention," by John H. Clark et al., *Journal of School Health*, March 1986.

10—"Social Disaffection, Friendship Patterns and Adolescent Cigarette Use: The Muscatine Study," Marvin D. Krohn et al., *Journal of School Health*, April 1986.

11—*Growing Up in Smoke*, MTI Teleprograms, March 1984.

Resources

For the leader:

- *We Can't Go On Like This*, by National Audio Visual Center, is an excellent 30-minute film that shows the reasons that people start to smoke, the rationalizations they make for not quitting and effective ways some have found to kick the habit. National Audio Visual Center, 8700 Edgeworth Drive, Capitol Heights, MD 20743; (800) 638-1300. Cost: $50 to purchase, $12 to rent.
- *Growing Up in Smoke*, by MTI, is a 15-minute film that shows the pervading influence of cigarette advertising. A good discussion starter about the pressure put on teens to smoke. MTI Teleprograms, 108 Wilmot Road, Deerfield, IL 60015, (800) 323-6301 (AK, HI & IL—(312) 940-1290). Rental: $75 for three days.
- *Kids on Smoking*, by Professional Research, is a 10-minute film designed for preteens that shows how children feel about smoking, how they make their decisions to smoke or not to smoke, and the importance of good information and good role models in making the decision. Contact Professional Research, Inc., 930 Pitner Ave., Evanston, IL 60202; (800) 421-2363, (312) 328-6700. Rental: $50 for five days.
- *Danger, Taking Control* and *Don't Bite off More Than You Should Chew* are three of the pamphlets, all free, available from: American Cancer Society, 19 W. 56th St., New York, NY 10019.
- *Yes, There Are a Lot of Good Reasons for Women to Quit Smoking* is a pamphlet from Wisconsin Clearinghouse that gives a list of reasons for quitting. Wisconsin Clearinghouse, PO Box 1468, 1245 E. Washington Ave., Madison, WI 53701. Cost: one copy, 20 cents.
- *Tobacco-Free Young American Reporter* is a free quarterly publication from the National Interagency Council on Smoking and Health. It lists facts on tobacco use, current trends and legislation. Write: Center for Health and Safety Studies, Office of Publications and Editorial Services, HPER Building Room 116, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47405.

More resources and possible speakers are available from:

American Heart Association
7320 Greenville Ave.
Dallas, TX 75321

American Lung Association
1740 Broadway
New York, NY 10019

Local branches of the American Heart Association and the American Lung Association

Office on Smoking and Health
Park Bulding, Room 1-10
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, MD 20857

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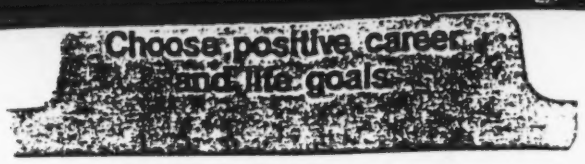

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PARENTING

The Underdeveloped Skill

Objectives

- To help parents teach their preteens and teens how to match their career goals to their values, interests, abilities and personalities
- To improve communication between parents and their children concerning career planning
- To help parents help their preteens and teens set positive life goals

The facts

- Fifty-six percent of eighth-grade students and 57 percent of eleventh-graders believed that the statement "The earlier one chooses his or her life's work the better" was true or mostly true, according to a 1983 American College Testing Program survey. (1)
- In a survey of ninth- through twelfth-grade students, 75 percent of the girls and 73 percent of the boys said they had already chosen a career. (2)
- According to a 1986 study, 70 percent of high school seniors work part-time jobs outside the home while attending school. Nearly 40 percent work between 11 and 25 hours a week at these jobs. (3)
- In a sample study of 1980 high school seniors by the National Center for Education Statistics, both male and female respondents ranked "success in their line of work" as their number one life value, ahead of marriage, strong friendships and leisure time. (4)

These facts suggest that career decision making is indeed a major concern of many adolescents. This does not mean, however, that teens always understand their career options. Premature career decisions, many experts believe, may be ill-advised, as they cut off career possibilities and stifle aspirations. Although career decision making should be a narrowing down process, it needn't be a narrow-minded one. Instead it is important to promote career awareness in youth by teaching them to assess and appreciate themselves—their own developing values, interests, abilities and temperament. Parents can become involved in this process by educating and directing their children with their career development.

Meeting ideas

Consult "Plan your parenting meetings carefully" and "Choose meetings activities" in the leader's guide for background information.

Energizers

Grab your audience's attention—start your meeting off with an energizer!

Quick queries (20 minutes)

Goal: **To stress to parents the importance of basing career decisions on one's interests and values.**

Tools: **Bring enough 3"x5" cards and pens or pencils for each member of your audience and a "hat" into which participants can drop their cards.**

Method: **Ask each participant to use the unlined side of the card to answer true or false to this statement: "When I was young my parents helped me to see a connection between what I liked to do and what I could do in my life." Then have them turn the card over and write down one thing they think they should tell their *own* children to encourage them to think about their interests and values when considering career choices. Collect the cards in the "hat." Tally the responses to the true/false statement and read several of the comments on the other side of the card. Ask the audience for their reactions. Conclude the activity by repeating or summarizing some of the feelings expressed in the cards. *Move on to the core meeting activity of your choice.***

Match point (20 minutes)

Goal: **To encourage parents and their children to match values, interests and abilities to careers.**

Tools: **A blackboard and chalk or an easel and markers.**

Method: **Before the meeting begins, prepare a blackboard or easel by making four columns with the following headings: career, values, interests and abilities. Tell the audience that you would like them to brainstorm. Briefly explain what each heading means. If preteens or teens are attending, ask them to suggest jobs that interest them. If only parents are present, ask them to name careers that interest their children. Write down about five suggestions. Move on to the other three headings in succession and ask the participants to match one or two values, interests and abilities appropriate for each job. After finishing the brainstorming, ask for any reactions or comments. *You may wish to follow this energizer with one of the films suggested in the core meeting activities below.***

Core meeting activities

Films (1 hour)

Goal: To promote career awareness in preteens or teens and their parents and to improve communication between them.

Tools: Choose from the following films. *Self-Assessment: A Tool for Career Decision* is a comprehensive learning program that seeks to show how abilities, interests, temperaments and values influence adolescents' career choices. Each of its three parts (covering self-assessment, personal inventories and career objectives) uses interesting, believable examples to illustrate its points. *Because It's Just Me* encourages students to take a personal inventory of their interests and abilities. Its companion film, *The Most Important Thing*, shows how career choice is a reflection of values and priorities. *Interests, Aptitudes, and Abilities* is about the concerns of a teenage girl planning for the future. The film presents an overview of the different types of interest inventories and aptitude tests available. *World of Work* focuses on the attitudes of three teens toward the world of work. It argues that teens should consider their interests, aptitudes and desired lifestyle, so that their career decisions will be by choice, not chance. Both films are part of a 16-program series on jobs. These three sets of films

would be appropriate for meetings with or without preteens or teens attending. Depending upon the film used, you will also need a screen, a 16mm film or filmstrip projector and an audiotape recorder.

Method: Let the audience know that you would like these films to be the starting ground for a discussion. After the film, ask the audience to comment. Encourage discussion with questions referring to specific values and ideas expressed in the films.

Parent/teen swap (55 minutes)

Goal: To use career daydreams to explore future career choices and to improve the communication skills of parents and their children.

Tools: Paper and pencils.

Method: Career daydreams can help to identify career direction and goals. Ask parents and children to attend the meeting. Explain the goal of the meeting. Have parents and their children form a group with another set of parents and their children. Distribute writing materials to a parent in each two-family group. Next ask the groups to swap parents and children and then break into two "new" family groups. Have the adults interview their "new children" by asking them to describe the specific career daydreams they have had, even when they were very young. If they wish, adults may get the interview going by talking about their own career daydreams. The interviewers should write down a brief description of each preteen or teen's daydream. (15 minutes)

Ask the "new" families to return to their original two-family group. Parents should then exchange their interview notes and briefly explain them to one another. The parents then can continue the interview by asking their own children questions about how career daydreams relate to the following:

- Their children's values (and their own) such as wanting to make a lot of money, work independently or help other people
- Interests and hobbies such as playing baseball, working with computers or cooking
- Abilities such as repairing electrical or mechanical devices, playing musical instruments or having a "head" for figures
- Personality such as very outgoing and friendly to strangers or quiet and preferring to read or do things alone

Remember that all of the above will probably change as children develop. Ask your children how they feel their daydreams *have* changed for them already. (20 minutes)

Then have everyone form back into their original groups. Have the parents ask the preteens or teens about their present aspirations and how they think their career daydreams might tell them something about their future career choices. (10 minutes)

Bring all groups back together. Ask the participants what they learned in their interviews and discussions. Ask whether there are any comments, questions or problems. Sum up the meeting's key points. (5-10 minutes)

References

1—"Ten Years of Career Development: A Nationwide Study of High School Students" by Dale J. Prediger and Richard L. Sawyer, *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 1986.

2—*Teens Speak Out: A Report from Today's Teens* by Jane Rinzler, Donald I. Fine, Inc., 1985.

3—"A Study of High School Seniors," Terry F. White, *Phi Delta Kappan*, 1986.

4—*High School and Beyond . . . Two Years After High School: A Capsule Description of 1980 Seniors*, National Center for Education Statistics, 1982.

Resources

For the leader and parent:

- *World of Work* and *Interests, Aptitudes, and Abilities*. 20 minutes each, videotape. Part of a 16-program series on *Jobs: Seeking, Finding, Keeping*. Agency for Instructional Technology, Box A, Bloomington, IN 47402; (812) 339-2203. Rental: $25 each.
- *Self-Assessment: A Tool for Career Decision*. 3 parts, 37 minutes; filmstrips/audiotapes. Sunburst Communications, Department AW, 39 Washington Ave., Pleasantville, NY 10570; (914) 769-5030. Available for 30-day free preview with school affiliation. Cost: $175 VHS or 16mm.
- *The Most Important Thing* and *Because It's Just Me*, 15 minutes each, VHS or 16mm. Part of an eight film *Whatcha Gonna Do?* series. Encyclopedia Britannica Educational Corporation, 310 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60604; (800) 554-9862. Rental: $75 for 3 days.
- *Elementary Career Awareness Laboratories in Dade County Public Schools*. Brochure describes career laboratories that promote career awareness for students in grades 4-6 through "hands-on" activities. Sample copy free to PTAs. For further information contact Dade County Public Schools, 1450 NE Second Ave., Room 727, Miami, FL 33132; (305) 995-1772.
- *Life Planning Education: A Youth Development Program* by Carol Hunter Geboy, Lynn Peterson, Sean Casey, Leslie Hardy and Sarah Renner, 1985. Excellent program designed for leaders devoted to making teens realize how closely linked parenthood decisions and vocational choices are. Includes how-to section for leaders, life planning education activities for teens and resources. Center for Population Options, 1012 14th St. NW, Suite 1200, Washington, DC 20005; (202) 347-5700. Cost: $35.
- *Instructor's Guide for "Choices" and "Challenges": A Course in Personal Planning and Self-Awareness for Teen-Aged Women and Men* by Mindy Bingham, Judy Edmondson and Sandy Stryker, 1984. Cost: $9.95 including postage and handling. Developed by an affiliate of the Girls Clubs of America (GCA). Also available is a 60-page booklet *Facts and Reflections on Careers for Today's Girls*, Cost: $12.95. GCA National Resource Center, 441 W. Michigan St., Indianapolis, IN 46202.
- *Career Passport Program* is a high school curriculum program designed to enhance students' self-esteem by helping them see the link between their present abilities, previous paid and volunteer work experiences and their future career plans. While in the program students develop their own "career passport," a formal document indicating their special skills and abilities. For further information contact Ivan Charner, National Institute for Work and Learning, 1255 23rd St. NW, Washington, DC 20036; (202) 862-8845. Cost: $9.50 leader's guide, $19.95 student workbook.

For the preteen and teen:

- *Choices: A Teen Woman's Journal for Self-Awareness and Personal Planning* and its companion for teen men, *Challenges*, are excellent workbooks. They encourage young men and women to integrate career awareness and planning with such concerns as marriage and children. Advocacy Press, PO Box 236, Santa Barbara, CA 93102. Cost: $14.95 each.
- The Boy Scouts of America Exploring Division has a career awareness exploring guide for boys. Contact your local chapter.
- *Make a Life for Yourself* is a booklet for teens with information included in the Center for Population Option's Life Planning Education curriculum program (see "Resources/For the leader"). Center for Population Options, 1012 14th St. NW, Suite 1200, Washington, DC 20005. Cost: single copy, $1; 2-10 copies, 85 cents; more than 10, 80 cents.

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GREEN TAB

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PARENTING

The Underdeveloped Skill

Objectives

- To encourage parents to help their children with career planning
- To suggest ways parents can *guide* their children in choosing a career
- To inform parents about careers and the education and training needed for children to achieve their goals

The facts

- Numerous parent-youth studies conclude that, when it comes to making career decisions, parents are the biggest influence on their children. (1)
- Fifty-seven percent of Americans believe that career education should be a required subject for high school students, whether or not they plan to go on to college, according to the 17th annual nationwide Gallup poll on "The Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools" (September 1985). (2)
- In 1983, 45 percent of eighth-graders and 34 percent of eleventh-graders reported that their school career planning services were of little or no help to them, according to a recent American College Testing Program study. (3)
- Eighty-two percent of high school students' visits to guidance counselors concerned course selection and not career counseling, according to a 1983 national study of career information systems in secondary schools by the Educational Testing Service. (1)
- Although the 1985 Gallup poll of the general public ranked the need for students to "develop an understanding about different kinds of jobs and careers" third among 25 educational goals, high school teachers also surveyed ranked this goal 16th. (4)

These facts suggest that career education for preteens and teens is a priority for *both* parents and their children. It also suggests that more needs to be done about career education in the schools. Schools are valuable sources of information and assistance for students, but they are not able to assume primary responsibility for the career guidance of adolescents. Helping children identify their values, interests and abilities, providing information and, most importantly, offering guidance by exploring career and life options must begin at home with parents.

Meeting ideas

Select from the following ideas to achieve your meeting goals. Consult "Plan your parenting meetings carefully" and "Choose meeting activities" in the leader's guide for background information.

Energizers

Grab your audience's attention—start your meeting off with an energizer!

Quick queries (20 minutes)

Goal: **To encourage audience members to think about the career guidance they received from their parents and the guidance they would like to offer their children.**

Tools: **Bring at least one 3"x5" card and pens or pencils for each member of your audience and a "hat" into which participants can drop their cards.**

Method: **Ask each participant to use the unlined side of the card to write down one thing their parents told them concerning career guidance and development when they were young. Then have them turn the card over and write down one thing that they feel is important to tell their own children about career decisions and options. Collect the cards in the "hat." Read several of the cards and ask the audience for reactions to the comments. Conclude the activity by repeating or summarizing some of the feelings expressed in the cards.** ***Go on to the core meeting activity.***

Film (20 minutes)

Goal: **To stimulate communication between parents and their children regarding career choices and decisions.**

Tools: What Next? **is an entertaining video that addresses the problem of the anxieties teenagers face when making career decisions. It stresses that choosing one's life work is an ongoing process and that it helps to discuss career aspirations with parents and friends. Although geared to 14- to 17-year olds, its lively style and emphasis on relationships between parents and children make it an excellent meeting energizer.**

Method: **Before showing any film, take time to view it so that you will know what it is about. Tell your audience that you are going process and that it helps to discuss career aspirations tions. Briefly state what it is about. Say that the film will be followed by a brief discussion and show the film. After the film, ask for comments. Ask parents for their reaction to the film do they talk to their preteens or teens about their career goals? Ask participating preteens or teens what new ideas or information the film provided.** ***Go on to the core meeting activity.***

Core meeting activities

Speaker (40-45 minutes)

Goal: To provide parents, and their kids if attending, with general information and resources on careers and to explain the role of a guidance counselor.

Tools: The *Occupational Outlook Handbook* and other resources if available. Consult with the speaker about any additional tools needed.

Method: Invite a school guidance counselor to speak to parents and youth in attendance. If needed, contact the school district superintendent's office or school principal for assistance. Ask the speaker to bring a copy of the *Occupational*

Outlook Handbook (for further information, see "Resources/For the leader") and to demonstrate how this valuable tool can be used by preteens or teens and by parents providing career guidance. Be sure to inform the speaker before the workshop about your goals and who will be participating. Consult the "Speakers" section of the leader's guide for basic information before starting.

Panel (1 hour)

Goal: To show the variety of career paths possible and to provide practical information on career choices for adolescents.

Tools: Consult with the panel members about the tools they will need. Ask them to bring at least one visual aid to illustrate the job that they do.

Method: Consult the "Panels" section of the leader's guide and the "Methods" section of the preceding core meeting activity for basic information before starting. Choose panelists who have interesting or successful jobs. For assistance in selecting panelists, contact the local chamber of commerce; newspaper editors; service organizations such as the Boy Scouts, Girls Clubs or Women's American Organization for Rehabilitation through Training (ORT); school community relations offices and departments of career or vocational education; mayor's office; and spouses, friends or coworkers. Invite both parents and preteens and teens to the meeting. Be prepared to act as a moderator for the panel. Start things going by posing some specific questions. Ask the panelists to briefly describe career paths and job duties, what career and related education and training or guidance their parents provided them, how parents can help their children with career planning and what help they've given to their own children. Allow time for questions, especially those from preteens and teens. If preteens or teens are attending, encourage them to ask questions.

References

1—*How to Help Your Child Choose a Career* by Luther B. Otto, M. Evans and Company, Inc., 1984.

2—"The 17th Annual Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools," *Phi Delta Kappan*, September 1985.

3—"Ten Years of Career Development: A Nationwide Study of High School Students," by Dale J. Prediger and Richard L. Sawyer, *Journal of Counseling and Development*.

4—*The Phi Delta Kappa Gallup Polls of Attitudes Toward Education 1969-1984: A Topical Summary*, Stanley M. Elam, ed., Bloomington, Indiana, 1984.

Resources

For the leader:

- *What Next?* 13 minutes. Included in the 12-program series entitled *On the Level*. Agency for Instructional Technology, Box A, Bloomington, IN 47402; (812) 339-2203. Rental: $25.
- *Job Success Begins at Home*. Audiovisual kit, including two 10-minute filmstrips, audiotapes, teacher's manual and 10 sets of booklets (available in English and Spanish). Designed to teach students in grades 4-9 about job skills. Home and School Institute, Special Projects Office, 1201 16th St. NW, Washington, DC 20036; (202) 466-3633. Cost: $5 for a set of six booklets; $50 for the audiovisual kit.
- *Career Planning System (CPS)* is a microcomputer instructional package that can be used by educators to teach students how to explore and plan careers. No special knowledge of computers is required to use the system, and it is written in simple, easily understood language (3.5 grade reading level). The package consists of floppy disks, print student guides and an instructor manual. The CPS can be used with Apple or Atari personal computers. Designed by the National Center for Research in Vocational Education and available from The Conover Company, PO Box 155, Omro, WI 54963; (414) 685-5707, (800) 933-1933. Cost: $495 (CPS 101).
- American Association for Counseling and Development (AACD). Operates the National Career Information Center, a special library of 5,100 books and pamphlets. Publishes quarterly *Journal of Employment Counseling*, $6 per copy. The *AACD 1990 Catalog: Books, Journals, Films and Videotapes* is available for free. 5999 Stevenson Ave., Alexandria, VA 22304; (703) 823-9800, (800) 347-6647.
- Sunburst Communications, Inc., Department TG, Pleasantville, NY, 10670; (800) 431-1934. Supplies films on a variety of career-oriented topics. Free 30-day previews. Send for their catalog.
- Women's American Organization for Rehabilitation through Training (ORT). Many local units of this organization conduct career awareness programs in their communities in cooperation with their school districts. For further information contact a local unit in your community or the Community Affairs Department, Women's American ORT, 315 Park Ave. S, New York, NY 10010; (212) 505-7700.
- The Center on Education and Training for Employment. The center provides access to resource information on practically everything available in the field of career education including curriculum guides, studies and audiovisual materials. Program Information Office, The Center on Education and Training for Employment, 1900 Kenny Road, Columbus, OH 43210-1090; (614) 486-3655 or (800) 848-4815.

For the parent:

- *How to Help Your Child Choose a Career* by Luther B. Otto. Designed as a guide for parents of high school-age kids, teaching them how to advise their children concerning career choices. Includes information on today's teens, interest surveys, career options, guide to employment opportunities, career exploration workbook and career education resources for parents and children. M. Evans and Co., 216 E. 49th St., New York, NY 10017; (212) 688-2810. Cost: $11.95.

For the preteen and teen:

- *Careers* magazine is geared to teens and is published five times a year, in January, March, September, October and November. E. M. Guild Inc., 1001 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10018; (212) 354-8877. Cost: $1.75 per copy.
- *Go For It! How to Get Your First Good Job* by Martha C. Douglas. Career planning guide for young adults. Designed to provide teens with ideas and information on how to realize their career options, establish goals and choose careers appropriate to their values, talents and personality. Relies on numerous examples based on students' actual experiences. Ten Speed Press, Box 7123, Berkeley, CA 94707; (415) 845-8414. Cost: $5.95, paper.
- *Occupational Briefs* series. Series of briefs containing information on more than 500 occupations. May also be available from school guidance offices. Chronicle Guidance Publications, Inc., PO Box 1190, Aurora Street Extension, Moravia, NY 13118; (315) 497-0330. Cost: subscription, $95.50; individual briefs, $5.
- *Occupational Outlook Handbook*. The major source of information on specific occupations and general career options and resources. Covers in detail approximately 200 occupations. The *Handbook* gives a brief description of each occupation, indicates education and training requirements, salary ranges, employment outlook and other related careers. Published by: Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), available for $12.95 from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. The BLS also publishes the *Occupational Outlook Quarterly*, which provides up-to-date information between editions of the biennial *Handbook*.

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SHOULD ALL CHILDREN GO TO COLLEGE?

Objectives

- To help parents guide their children in making decisions about attending college
- To inform parents of preteens and teens about colleges and other schools of higher education

The facts

- Ninety-one percent of Americans believe that a college education today is either very important or fairly important, according to a 1985 Gallup poll. (1)
- A 1989 Gallup poll showed that an overwhelming 83 percent of the respondents favored more state and federal assistance for high school graduates who have the ability and desire to attend college but can't afford it. (2)
- In 1960, 41.1 percent of Americans 25 and older had completed high school and only 7.7 percent had graduated from a four-year college; by 1987 these figures had increased dramatically to 75.6 percent and 19.9 percent respectively. (3)
- In 1988 the unemployment rate for men age 25 and over who had completed one to three years of high school was 10.1 percent; four years of high school, 6.2 percent; and four years of college, 1.6 percent. The respective figures for women were: 8.9 percent, 4.6 percent and 1.9 percent. (3)
- Between 1979 and 1985, the United States suffered a net loss of 1.7 million jobs in manufacturing; this means that stable jobs that pay well but do not require advanced training are rapidly disappearing. (4)
- Only 12 million of the 40 million Americans being educated past high school today (one-half of the adult population) are enrolled in colleges and universities. "Lifelong learning" now takes place through such diverse institutions as hospitals, museums and corporations. (5)

Some of the most important decisions high school students make involve whether or not to attend college. Such decisions, based on their abilities and aspirations, must be made *before* they are ready to graduate. If students decide to attend college, the following may need to be considered.

- *Where*—not only which particular college, but also what type—for instance, a four-year liberal arts college, a two-year community college or vocational and technical schools.
- *When*—for example, high school graduates may wish to work full-time and delay entering college, attend college while working part-time or enter an apprenticeship program.
- *How much*—costs vary substantially; for instance, the estimated average cost of tuition at a four-year private college was $7,440 in 1986—about five times more than tuition at a public college; at a private two-year college, the average tuition was $3,620 compared to $620 for a public one. Related decisions to be made may include working during summers and during the school year and determining possible sources of financial assistance such as grants, loans and aid from parents. Through their guidance, parents can help their children make informed decisions about college and the other educational options available to them.

Meeting ideas

Select from the following ideas to achieve your meeting goals. Consult "Plan your parenting meetings carefully" and "Choose meeting activities" in the leader's guide for background information. Also consult the meeting card on decision making for information and resources.

Energizers

Grab your audience's attention—start your meeting off with an energizer!

Film (20 minutes)

Goal: **To suggest the alternatives available to high school graduates and to learn how they can choose the best one for them.**

Tools: **The filmstrip *Risks and Strategy* focuses on the problem of a young man deciding whether to attend college. It emphasizes that while decisions about the future may involve taking risks, good decisions can be made by becoming informed and developing strategies. The film may be used as a discussion-starter for meetings with parents and preteens or teens. Filmstrip projector, screen and audiotape recorder required.**

Method: **Before showing any film, take time to view it so that you will know what it is about. Tell your audience that you are going to show them a film. Briefly state what it is about and show the film. After the film, ask the audience for brief comments. Encourage discussion with questions referring to problems indicated or ideas and values expressed in the film. *Go on to your core meeting activity.***

Brainstorm (20 minutes)

Goal: **To help parents and their children make decisions about college.**

Tools: **A blackboard and chalk or an easel and markers.**

Method: **Before the meeting begins, make three columns on your blackboard or easel with the headings "yes," "no" and "alternatives." Tell the participants that the group is going to brainstorm a list of the reasons in favor of or against attending college and of the possible alternatives. If preteens or teens are attending, you may wish to separate the parents and their children into two groups with two leaders and brainstorm separately. Write down all the opinions and ideas of the group. For instance, ask the participants if they believe a college education increases career options, is unnecessary or is too expensive for some or would be a "sound investment" for others.**

As soon as fairly thorough lists have been developed, review each list and ask if there are any further thoughts about them. If separate lists are being done by parents and preteens and teens, have the two groups review and compare each other's lists. Ask the group for comments. Encourage discussion by asking questions based on the lists and, if you wish, provide background information included in "The facts" above. *Go on to your core meeting activity.*

Core meeting activities

Panel (1 hour)

Goal: To inform parents of preteens and teens about college and other career options for high school graduates.

Tools: Consult with the panel members about the tools they will need, including audiovisual equipment.

Method: Consult the "Panels" section of the leader's guide for basic information before starting. Panelists may include college admissions or placement officers, guidance or employment counselors, college graduates, a representative from an on-the-job training program or an apprenticeship program. Select from three of the above or any others you believe are best suited to the needs of your community. Allow time for questions. If preteens or teens are attending, encourage them to ask questions.

Role playing (1 hour)

Goal: To help parents practice communicating with their children about making decisions about college.

Tools: Copy the *Talking skills/Listening skills* handout sheet and a list describing three role-playing situations from the five choices listed below. Set up the room so that participants can easily break into groups of three.

Method: Discuss the *Talking skills/Listening skills* handout. Point out the various ways it suggests to improve communication. Tell the group that they will be *practicing* these methods by role playing. Select three role-playing situations from among the following list or develop your own role-playing situations.

- Henry, a high school junior, has his heart set on attending an expensive out-of-state private college. His best friend, Jason, also hopes to attend this college. Henry's dad, Sid, thinks this school would be a good choice but is not sure it is affordable. What should Henry's dad do in this situation? What should he say to Henry?

- Laura, a sophomore, has always been fascinated by computers and is interested in taking a course to learn a computer language. While she does well in math, her grades in other academic subjects are not great because she finds it hard to concentrate on them. Her older brother and sister both went to her dad John's alma mater, a four-year liberal arts college. She also feels she is expected to go there but is not sure she wants to go. How can John discuss this with her, let her know about her options and help her make a decision?

- Timothy, an eighth-grader, will be attending high school next year. He just found out that he needs to decide which courses he will be taking in the ninth grade but is bewildered by his options and isn't sure what to decide. What can his mom, Lydia, do to help him make up his mind?

- Ellen, a senior, was accepted at two of the five colleges to which she applied. She was surprised to learn that she was accepted at a prestigious out-of-state school with a rigorous admissions policy. She was offered a good financial aid package from the college, including a grant, loans and work-study. However, many of her other friends, including her boyfriend, Tom, will be attending the other college at which she was accepted. It's a public college in her hometown. She's very ambitious but also is reluctant to leave her family and friends. How can her dad, Max, help her make a decision?

- Bob, 19, dropped out of high school when he was 16 but is now studying to get his GED (General Equivalency Diploma), which he hopes to receive next year. Meanwhile, he's been working at construction jobs. The pay is very good, but he's not always sure when he will be working. Bob wants to go back to school when he gets his high school diploma but doesn't know where to go and what he's interested in. What could his mom, Millie, do to help him learn about his choices and make the decision that is best for him?

References

1—"The 17th Annual Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools," *Phi Delta Kappan,* September 1985.

2—"The 21st Annual Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools," *Phi Delta Kappan,* September 1989.

3—*Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1989,* 109th edition, U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1989.

4—"The Forgotten Half: Non-College Bound Youth in America," *Phi Delta Kappan,* February 1988.

5—*How to Help Your Child Choose A Career* by Luther B. Otto, K. Evans and Company, Inc., 1984.

Resources

For the leader or parent:

- *Life Goals, Part 3: Risks and Strategy,* 12 minutes. Human Relations Media, 175 Tompkins Ave., Pleasantville, NY 10570; (800) 431-2050. Free 30-day preview with school affiliation.
- *Academic Preparation for College: What Students Need to Know and Be Able to Do.* Forty-six page booklet for parents, students and teachers. Office of Academic Affairs, The College Board, 45 Columbus Ave., New York, NY 10023. Single copy free.
- The National Association of Trade and Technical Schools, PO Box 2006, Annapolis Junction, MD 20701; (202) 333-1021. There are five brochures in a series; you may request up to 400 free brochures.
- *Paving the Way* is a videotape and companion booklet on early college planning geared to parents. For more information on rental or purchase contact the National Institute of Independent Colleges and Universities, 1430 Broadway, Ninth Floor, New York, NY 10018. Rental: $15. Purchase: $54, shipping and handling included.

For the preteen and teen:

Some of these books and guides may be available in your local library.

- *Student Guide: Five Federal Financial Aid Programs* and an *Application for Federal Student Aid.* This free guide is revised annually and includes information on financial aid programs for colleges and vocational and technical schools. Federal Student Aid Programs, Department DEA-086, Pueblo, CO 81009.
- *The College Handbook.* College Board Publication Orders, Box 886, New York, NY 10101; (212) 713-8000. Cost: $17.95, shipping/handling included if prepaid.
- *College Planning-Search Book,* 11th ed., 1985. The American College Testing Program, Box 168, Iowa City, IA 52243. Cost: $6.00 paper.

All of the above resources are also helpful for parents of preteens and teens.

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Use this reproducible to help plan your PTA's meeting calendar for the year and to help you plan each meeting.

- Set up a committee to review the *Parenting: The Underdeveloped Skill* box and develop plans for using it.

- If your box is on loan from your state office or council, consider making copies for all members of your planning committee.

- Take a survey of your community to find out what topics interest parents.

- Set goals for using the box throughout the year.

- Develop a calendar of PTA meetings and events based on the box materials.

- Choose the meeting and event dates carefully to avoid conflict with holidays and other community events.

- Choose meeting times and days that are most successful in attracting participants; for instance, weekday evening meetings may attract more parents from your community than weekend meetings.

- Assign jobs to committee members such as publicity, refreshments and hospitality, room setup, audiovisual equipment, handouts and meeting facilitation.

- Work with other community groups and service agencies to enhance the quality and effectiveness of your meetings and events and broaden your potential audience.

- Explore resources in your community and state and around the country. Build a resource file of speakers, films, pamphlets and basic information on the topics you want to cover.

Meeting checklist

Two to three months in advance:

_____ Choose your meeting date: _____

_____ Determine meeting place: _____

_____ Discuss possible speakers, meeting formats and activities.

_____ Develop a meeting agenda.

_____ Plan your publicity campaign:

- _____ fliers
- _____ ads in PTA bulletins
- _____ announcements on community or workplace bulletin boards
- _____ oral announcements at meetings
- _____ listings in a local paper
- _____ posters in store windows
- _____ other

_____ Preview films and handouts.

_____ Contact potential speakers or panel members. Identify yourself, why you are calling, the topic of your meeting and its goals, the audience you expect and other details. Send potential speakers a copy of the appropriate meeting card and any publications or reproducibles associated with it. Prepare a speaker interview and record sheet such as this:

Name:
Title:
Affiliations:
Address:
Phone:
Qualifications:
Speaker's attitudes on topic to be covered:
Requests for meeting: audiovisuals, podium, etc.

Six to eight weeks in advance:

_____ Determine your equipment needs:

- _____ audiovisuals
- _____ tables _____ chairs
- _____ chalkboard, erasers and chalk
- _____ easels _____ podium
- _____ other

_____ Order films.

_____ Order equipment.

_____ Order handouts.

_____ Plan room setup.

_____ Check the meeting room for electrical outlets, lighting, heating/air conditioning and size.

Two weeks in advance:

_____ Copy any handouts such as the reproducibles provided in this box or a meeting agenda.

_____ Prepare handout packets for participants.

_____ Learn how to use audiovisual or other equipment.

_____ Arrange for refreshments.

_____ Make up posters, props and display boards.

Day of meeting:

_____ Meet with your committee at least an hour before the start of your parenting meeting to check over the room and make sure that everything is ready and in place.

_____ Check that all equipment is ready and working. Slides? Film? Tapes?

_____ Check that all posters, props and display boards are on hand.

_____ Have necessary small supplies on hand:

- _____ pencils and paper for participants
- _____ chalk _____ markers
- _____ tape _____ scissors
- _____ other

Follow-up:

_____ Write thank-you notes to speakers and other helpers.

_____ Evaluate your meeting's success.

_____ Report on the meeting to your PTA board or at a general PTA meeting.

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- **Act strongly against prejudice.** You or your children may overhear a racist joke. Don't ignore it. Tell the person, "That's not funny; it's unfair and harmful, and I don't want to hear it."

- **Set a good example.** Teens compare what you do to what you say. Maintain and encourage friendships with people of diverse racial, ethnic and religious backgrounds.

- **Take advantage of cultural opportunities.** Watch informative movies and TV programs with your kids. Take them to museums to appreciate and learn from cultures of people around the world. Be aware of comments you may make while watching a news item or reading a paper on such issues as affirmative action programs, crime, drugs, etc. Additional explanations may be needed to clarify your thoughts fully.

- **Discuss instances of prejudice and discrimination when they occur.** Be alert to events in the papers and on the news. Your teens will want to know what you think.

- **Encourage your teens to act against prejudice.** If they feel a TV show is biased, tell them to write a letter to the producer. Tell them not to tolerate racial or ethnic slurs directed at friends or themselves. Teach them responses like "Don't call him/me that; call him/me by name!"

- **Build your teen's self-esteem.** People who are loved and feel good about themselves are more likely to tolerate others and appreciate their problems.

- **Encourage uniqueness in all your kids and their friends.** Everyone shouldn't think, talk and look the same. What a boring world that would be!

- **Respond to your teen's remarks or actions.** For example, if you do hear a prejudiced comment, encourage discussion. Remember, teens may say something out of ignorance because they think it may make them popular with a group. Or they may be trying to shock you to find out where you stand. Ask your teen why he or she feels that way, what the thinking behind the comment is, what the evidence is and where he or she learned it. An open attitude will go a long way. Above all, make it clear that racist comments will not be tolerated.

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Questions

1) How many teenage girls become pregnant each year in the United States?

   a) 100,000 b) 250,000 c) 500,000
   d) more than 1 million

2) What percentage of 15-year-old boys are sexually active?

   a) 10 percent b) 20 percent c) 30 percent
   d) 50 percent

3) What percentage of 15-year-old girls are sexually active?

   a) 10 percent b) 20 percent c) 30 percent
   d) 50 percent

4) What percentage of parents have ever had a significant conversation with their children about sex?

   a) 10 percent b) 20 percent c) 30 percent
   d) 50 percent

5) What's the average age of first menstruation for girls today?

   a) 10-11 b) 11-12
   c) 12-13 d) 13-14

6) How early might a boy have his first "wet dream"?

   a) 10 b) 12 c) 13 d) 14

7) What percentage of American teens are likely to have engaged in sexual intercourse by the time they graduate from high school?

   a) 25 percent b) 35 percent c) 50 percent
   d) 75 percent

8) What's the best age to start teaching your child about sex and sexuality?

   a) from birth b) 5 c) 13 d) 16

9) What should you tell your child about sex?

   a) Facts about puberty
   b) Facts about intercourse
   c) Facts about reproduction
   d) Family values about love, marriage and child rearing
   e) Family views on masculinity and femininity
   f) All of the above

10) Which of the following are questions asked by adolescents about sex and sexuality? Check those that apply.

   _____ What age must a girl be before she can get pregnant?
   _____ Does a penis have to be a certain length to get a girl pregnant?
   _____ Do girls with bigger breasts have a stronger sex drive?
   _____ What's a gynecological exam?
   _____ Is something wrong if one testicle is lower than the other?
   _____ Why does menstruation occur?
   _____ What is a "wet dream"? How often do guys have them?
   _____ Am I normal?
   _____ How do I relate to the opposite sex?
   _____ How do I express loving feelings?

Answers

1) The answer is *d*. Each year 1.1 million teenagers become pregnant in the United States.

2) The answer is *c*. One-third of 15-year-old boys are sexually active.

3) The answer is *b*. One-fifth of 15-year-old girls are sexually active.

4) The answer is *b*. Only about 20 percent of parents have *ever* had a significant conversation with their children about sex.

5) The answer is *c*. The *average* age for girls to begin menstruation is 12 to 13 years old.

6) The answer is *a*. Boys may experience a "wet dream" as early as 10 years of age.

7) The answer is *c*. About 50 percent of teens will have experienced sexual intercourse by the time they graduate from high school.

8) The answer is *a*. It's never too early to begin teaching your child about sex and sexuality. Use the correct words for body parts, answer your toddler's questions and discuss television programs, magazines and books with your children. Let your children know your feelings about sexual issues. Show your children by your actions and attitudes that sexuality is an important, serious and good part of life. Parents and children will need to talk about sex and sexuality many times throughout childhood.

9) The answer is *f*. Talking about sex means talking about both facts and values. Your children need to know both in order to make informed decisions about their sexuality.

10) All the items listed are questions asked by adolescents. Often parents think that teens today know all there is to know about sex. More often both preteens and teens are ill-informed about sex.

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- *Sexuality Education Strategy and Resource Guide Programs for Parents* by Toni Clark, PhD, and Pamela M. Wilson, MSW, The Center for Population Options, 1983.
- *Talk, Listen, Care Kit*, Harvard Community Health Plan Foundation, 1989.
- *Preventing Children Having Children*, Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Clearinghouse, The Children's Defense Fund, 1986.
- *How to Help Your Teenager Postpone Sexual Involvement*, Marion Howard, Continuum Publishing Company, 1989.
- *Human Sexuality: The Family Source Book* by Sharon Goldsmith, RN, The C. V. Mosby Company, 1986.
- *Raising a Child Conservatively in a Sexually Permissive World* by Sol Gordon, PhD, and Judith Gordon, MSW, Simon & Schuster, Inc., 1983.
- *Seminars For Parents on Adolescent Sexuality Leader's Guide*, Education Development Center, Inc., 1978.

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- **Accept your children's feelings.** All feelings can be accepted; it is only the *actions* that sometimes need to be controlled.
- **Accept your children's individuality.**
- **Give praise openly and without reservation.**
- **Spend time together.** Take your children with you on a job. Introduce them to your coworkers. Walk around the block together. Share a favorite activity. These times don't have to be for big discussions, but they *do* build up trust between you.
- **Show you care** about them and want to protect them. Hug them. Touch them. Continue to be supportive. More than at any other time, adolescents need to be sure of their parents' love.
- **Respect their privacy** and show that you recognize their growing independence. They might then be more willing to share important information with you.
- **Listen without prejudgment.** Make the effort not to let preconceptions or the need to talk or defend yourself and your views interfere with your ability to hear what your children say.
- **Listen to the underlying meaning of your children's concerns.** Sometimes preteens and teens are trying to tell you something but can't seem to find the words. Sometimes they may be afraid to say exactly what they mean. But be careful. Don't read imaginary problems into your children's conversation. Never insist your children mean or are concerned about something they deny.
- **Resist giving advice,** even if it's helpful, unless your preteens or teens ask you for it. They often just need someone to listen to them so that they can work out their own solutions.
- **Don't overreact!** This can't be overemphasized. If teens think their parents are too concerned, they'll close themselves off. Give them the opportunity to talk and they'll work things out.
- **Express your values,** but go beyond "you should do this" or "I want you to do that." Describe the experiences that determined your values, the decisions that led you to accept certain beliefs, the reasons behind your feelings.
- **Hold family meetings.** Make this a time to discuss serious topics with the whole family, as well as a time to keep the household running smoothly—what's broken, what's missing, what needs to be replaced or bought.
- **Describe a problem without placing blame or commenting on the children's character.** If children see a problem and know that they are not being attacked, they are more likely to help with a solution.
- **Talk to your children's peers** about sensitive or controversial issues when you see them with your children. For instance, discuss a current news item. Such conversation won't be as emotionally charged since it's not as important to you what *other* people's kids do. Also, you can develop a perspective on how teens other than your own feel about certain issues.
- **Keep rules sensible, enforceable, few in number and well explained.**
- **Give preteens and teens rules,** but be flexible. Compromise over issues such as clothes, hairstyle or school activities that aren't of "life or death" importance.
- **Use books, magazines and newspapers** to fill in gaps or to start communication, especially for topics that are delicate or beyond your level of expertise. Your local library has a selection of books. Discuss them after you and your children have read them.
- **Use movies, TV and plays** as springboards for discussion. If something is mentioned in the movie that is important to you or that you think is important to your preteens or teens, bring it up.
- **Some good resources** for learning more about communicating with your preteens or teens are *Talking with Your Teenager: A Book for Parents* by Ruth Bell and Leni Zeiger Wildflower from Random House Publishers and *How to Talk So Kids Will Listen and Listen So Kids Will Talk* by Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish from Avon Books. Both are guides for parents on communicating with their children. Both include stories by parents on problems they have had with their children and how they have opened communication. The first focuses on specific issues for preteens and teens such as sexuality, substance abuse and the changes of puberty. The second is a how-to guide for parents to practice their communication skills.

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- **Be a good role model.** Let your teens know that you feel good about yourself. Be human with your children. If they see that you too can make mistakes and improve yourself because of them, they will be able to accept their own mistakes and use them as learning experiences.

- **Clearly define and enforce** limits and rules.

- **Show respect and allow for individual action** on the part of your preteens and teens within these given limits.

- **Reward teens** when you can. Give praise, recognition, a special privilege or increased responsibility and freedom for a job well done.

- **Accept your children as they are.** Don't expect them to fit into your mold for them.

- **Take their ideas and emotions seriously.** Your teens see their problems as real as you see yours. Don't belittle them by saying, "You'll grow out of it" or "It's not as bad as you think it is."

- **Make a wide range of activities available** for your children so that they can find the talent or activity that they enjoy and do well. This talent will help compensate for when they feel inadequate in other areas during adolescence.

- **Encourage activities** that make your children feel good. These might include photography, handicrafts, working in the garden. At times they need to do something not as obviously productive as the above activities to make themselves feel better. Allow them time for activities such as skipping stones, playing games, talking on the phone, making paper airplanes, reading sports magazines, people watching.

- **Teach your preteens and teens how to deal with money.** Help them budget the money they have now so that they can budget larger quantities when they're in college or working. Teach them to spend their allowance wisely, balance their bank account, fill out tax forms and take care of the odds and ends of budgeting.

- **Have reasonable expectations** for your children. Give them goals they can accomplish. Success breeds success!

- **Concentrate on improvement,** not perfection. Give encouragement with each step.

- **Help your children develop tolerance** toward those with different values, backgrounds, norms, etc. Help them appreciate other peoples' *strengths.*

- **Give your children the responsibility** of helping someone else. They will feel more useful and more valued.

- **Be available.** Give support on a task when they ask for it. Make sure they know that you will help if they want you to help.

- **Let them know that you value and care about them.**

- **Show them that what they do is important to you.** Talk about their activities with them. Go to their games, parents' day at school, drama presentations, awards ceremonies.

- **Remind them of the special things they have done.** It is more important that they be reminded of the good things than the bad.

- **Tell your children they're terrific and that you love them.** Sometimes, especially during adolescence, they don't hear that from anyone else.

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- *Life Planning Education,* The Center for Population Options, March 1985.
- *Our Children's Self-Esteem, Family Life Educator Selected Articles,* vol. 1-3, Network Publications.

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PARENTING

The Underdeveloped Skill

Questions

1) List alternative activities that a preteen or teen could engage in instead of taking drugs.

2) What do the following have in common?

- Crack
- Coke
- Snorting
- Rock
- Freebasing

3) The alcohol content in one beer is equal to:

_____ one glass of wine
_____ one one-ounce shot of liquor
_____ neither of these
_____ both of these

4) The number one drug of choice among American high school seniors is:

_____ marijuana
_____ alcohol
_____ cocaine
_____ PCP

5) What sobers up a drunk person?

_____ walking/exercise
_____ coffee
_____ food
_____ time
_____ a cold shower

6) Alcohol is not as dangerous as drugs.

_____ true
_____ false

7) If parents don't drink, their children won't drink.

_____ true
_____ false

8) Clove cigarettes are safer than tobacco cigarettes.

_____ true
_____ false

9) Name one of the four new warnings on cigarette labels.

10) Which of the following do you run the risk of getting from chewing or dipping smokeless tobacco?

_____ oral cancer
_____ nicotine addiction
_____ high blood pressure
_____ bad breath
_____ gum disease
_____ all of the above

11) Since the ban of cigarette ads on radio and television in 1971, money spent on cigarette advertising has:

_____ increased
_____ decreased

12) Name one of the three warnings now required on smokeless tobacco.

Answers

1) *Almost any activity is acceptable.* Some possibilities are dancing, working, doing sports, writing, listening to music, reading, watching television, hiking, bicycling and taking family trips.

2) *They are all terms related to cocaine,* the third most serious drug problem among American teens after alcohol and marijuana. "Coke" is a common name for cocaine. "Crack" and "rock" are terms used for a new type of cocaine that's purified with sodium bicarbonate instead of ether and then smoked. Freebasing means purifying cocaine, usually with ether. Snorting means sniffing cocaine as a powder.

3) *Both of these.* Four ounces of table wine, one ounce of vodka and 12 ounces of beer all have approximately the same amount of alcohol. A beer or wine drinker will get just as drunk as a whiskey drinker if he or she drinks equal numbers of glasses or shots.

4) *Alcohol.* While nearly two-thirds of high school seniors have tried other drugs, nine out of 10 have experimented with alcohol.

5) *Time.* Once alcohol is in the bloodstream, it has to be changed into harmless byproducts in the liver. This process, called metabolism, takes approximately two hours per drink (one can of beer, one ounce of liquor or one glass of wine). Although food can slow the rate of absorption of alcohol into the body, keeping a person from getting drunk as fast, there is no way to hurry the metabolic process once the alcohol is absorbed.

6) *False. Alcohol is a drug.* And for underage high school students, alcohol is an *illegal* drug.

7) *False.* The highest incidence of alcoholism is among offspring of parents who are alcoholics or *abstainers.* This is because children from teetotalling homes may not have any reliable information about alcohol to base their decisions on or because they rebel from an extreme position on alcohol.

8) *False!* Clove cigarettes are 60 percent tobacco and 40 percent cloves. They have *twice* the tar and nicotine of moderately tar-containing American cigarettes. Because the clove smoke anesthetizes the throat, smokers think the cigarettes are mild and inhale toxins more deeply than they would with regular cigarettes.

9) **SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Smoking Causes Lung Cancer, Heart Disease, Emphysema, and May Complicate Pregnancy.**

SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Smoking by Pregnant Women May Result in Fetal Injury, Premature Birth, and Low Birth Weight.

SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Cigarette Smoke Contains Carbon Monoxide.

SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Quitting Smoking Now Greatly Reduces Serious Risks to Your Health.

10) *All of these problems*—oral cancer, nicotine addiction, high blood pressure, bad breath and gum disease—can be caused by chewing or dipping. These problems can be even worse in young users since mouth tissues may still be growing.

11) Cigarette advertising has *increased* more than ten-fold, from $257 million in 1972 to $2.6 billion in 1983. The money is spent in print; on promotion of musical, cultural and sports events; and on billboards.

12) Warning: This product may cause mouth cancer.
Warning: This product may cause gum disease and tooth loss.
Warning: This product is not a safe alternative to cigarettes.

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PARENTING

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AIDS: WHAT PARENTS SHOULD KNOW

True/false statements on AIDS

Mark whether you think these statements are true or false. Answers are listed below.

1. The main ways that HIV (the virus that causes AIDS) is spread are through sexual contact and sharing needles with a person who carries the AIDS virus.

True False

2. You cannot get AIDS from insects or tears; from hugging, kissing, touching, shaking hands or eating in restaurants with a person with AIDS; or from using the same dishes, toilet, doorknob, telephone, swimming pool, household furniture or office machinery a person with AIDS has used.

True False

3. Less than half of all teenagers have had sexual intercourse before the age of 20.

True False

4. The U.S. Surgeon General has recommended that education about AIDS begin in elementary school.

True False

5. Teens and preteens are at risk of becoming infected with the AIDS virus if they experiment with sex and/or intravenous drugs.

True False

6. You can tell when people are infected with the AIDS virus (HIV) because they look unhealthy.

True False

7. When used the right way for every act of sexual intercourse, latex condoms can lower your risk of becoming infected with HIV.

True False

ANSWERS

1. True. People get HIV mainly by having sex (heterosexual or homosexual) with an infected partner or by sharing intravenous needles with someone who has the virus. HIV can also be transmitted if people share needles for tattooing, steroids or earpiercing. Pregnant women can also pass the virus on to their baby before or at birth. Before 1985, when routine testing of the U.S. blood supply began, people who received blood transfusions were also at risk. Now that risk is negligible.

2. True. Studies have shown no AIDS cases in family members living with a person who has AIDS, even after very close, but nonsexual, contact.

3. False. Seven in 10 teenage girls and eight in 10 teenage boys have had sexual intercourse before the age of 20, according to a 1986 report of the Alan Guttmacher Institute, a New York-based research organization.

4. True. By teaching children about AIDS, we will help prevent its spread. HIV and AIDS education should be part of a comprehensive health education curriculum that begins in the early grades.

5. True. According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, two-thirds of all high school seniors have tried some drug other than alcohol. Although most have not tried IV drugs, other illegal drugs can impair good decision making about sex and drug use.

6. False. A person infected with HIV may show no apparent signs of having the virus for many years. However, he or she can still give it to others during that time. Only a blood test can reveal if a person has been infected.

7. True. However, even used the right way, condoms can break or leak. You may be able to lower the risk of infection further by using a spermicide containing the chemical nonoxynol-9. Some condoms have nonoxynol-9 in them. Always choose a latex condom, not one made of natural lambskin.

The only perfectly safe sexual relationship is a mutually monogamous one between two uninfected partners.

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PARENTING

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TEENS AND AIDS: PLAY IT SAFE OR DON'T PLAY AT ALL!

A fact sheet for teens on AIDS

News for you!

AIDS—Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome—is caused by the human immunodeficiency virus, commonly known as HIV. AIDS is fatal. There is no cure and no vaccine to prevent it.

More than 1 million people may be infected with HIV. Many will have no signs of illness for many years, but all of them, even those who look and feel well, can pass the virus on to others through sexual contact or drug needles. Women infected with HIV may infect their babies before or during birth or through breast-feeding.

Almost 500 teens have developed AIDS. That may not seem like a lot, but there have been 10 times as many cases—more than 5,200—in people 20-24 years old. Most of these individuals got the virus when they were in their teens.

AIDS is hard to get

AIDS is caused by a virus found in blood and semen. The virus cannot live very long outside the body. You can't get AIDS from casual contact. This means the virus is not passed by hugging, social kissing (such as on the cheek), sharing brushes or combs, holding hands, eating in restaurants or sharing dishes. You can't get AIDS from sweat, tears, toilets, doorknobs, telephones, swimming pools, household furniture or office machinery.

There are no reported cases of AIDS passed by French or deep kissing.

Play it safe

Drugs and alcohol. Both alcohol and illegal drugs affect your judgment. You may be less likely to avoid risky behaviors that increase your chance of HIV infection. Sharing IV drug needles or syringes even one time with someone infected with HIV is enough to infect you too.

Abstinence. The easiest and surest way to avoid AIDS is to avoid sex and injecting illegal drugs. Avoiding sex probably won't work for the rest of your life though, so we have listed some other options besides abstinence.

Monogamy. Have sex with only one person. Make sure *before* you have any sexual contact that you and the person you have sex with do not have HIV. Remain mutually faithful.

Safer sex. It's possible to reduce your risk of getting AIDS when you have sex. Males should wear a latex condom during every act of intercourse, even for oral intercourse and especially for anal intercourse, since it may cause tearing in tissue through which the AIDS virus can pass. Condoms come in different sizes and colors. Find one that contains nonoxynol-9, a chemical that kills HIV. Females can also use a foam or cream containing nonoxynol-9, in addition to having their male partners use condoms, to lower the risk of infection.

If you don't play it safe . . .

Not everybody who has unprotected sex will get AIDS. Not everyone who uses IV drugs will get AIDS. But every time you have sex with someone new and every time you inject drugs you increase your risk of getting AIDS. So play it safe or don't play at all!

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Copy this form and use it to order multiple copies of the National PTA publications whenever you plan a meeting or event.* Also see the March of Dimes publications listing.

Young Children and Drugs: What Parents Can Do, available for $6 per 100 copies, in both English and Spanish.
Teens, Alcohol and Drugs: What Parents Can Do, available for $6 per 100 copies.
How to Talk to Your Child about Sex, available for $12 per 100 copies.
How to Talk to Your Preteen and Teen about Sex, available for $12 per 100 copies.
Discipline: A Parent's Guide, available for $6 per 100 copies.
How to Talk to Your Teens and Children About AIDS, available for $15 per 100 copies.
What to Tell Your Child About Prejudice and Discrimination, available for $8 per 100 copies.

Yes! The _____ PTA/March of Dimes Chapter (circle one) would like National PTA publications.

All orders must be prepaid. Please make check payable to National PTA. Allow 6-8 weeks for shipping. We regret that we cannot bill you or accept C.O.D. orders.

Quantity	Name of Publication	Unit Price	Total Price
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	Discipline: A Parent's Guide	$ 6/100	
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